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Sam^r. White.
10 Feb. 1789.

Willis —
Stanhope —
Kennett —
Gastrell —
Moss —
Bradford —
Smalbridge —
Snape —
Willoughby ^{de} Broke

Talbot —
W. Lupton
Tho^r. Shorla
Jas Knight —
Nat^l. Marshall
Bp Boulter —
Waterland —

W. Berrieman —
Tho^r. Mangey —
Jos^l. Watson —
Tho^r. Yalden —

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London

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Printed

London and Westminster, Charity Schools

Twenty Five
SERMONS

PREACHED AT THE

Anniversary Meetings

OF THE

Children Educated in the CHARITY-
SCHOOLS in and about the Cities of
London and Westminster, on

Thursday in WHITSON-WEEK,

From the Year 1704, to 1728 inclusive,

By several of the Right Reverend the
Bishops, and other Dignitaries.

*Published at the Request of the Gentlemen
concerned in the said Charity.*

L O N D O N:

Printed by JOSEPH DOWNING, in Bartholo-
mew-Close near West-Smithfield, 1729.

Twenty Five

SEPMONS

PRINTED AT THE

University Meetings

OF THE

British Museum in the Cities of
London and



for Work

in the City of London

and the County of Middlesex

and the County of Surrey

and the County of Kent

and the County of Sussex

and the County of Hampshire

and the County of Devon

and the County of Cornwall

and the County of Dorset

and the County of Somerset

and the County of Gloucestershire

and the County of Wiltshire

and the County of Berkshire

and the County of Oxfordshire

and the County of Buckinghamshire

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A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *ANDREW's* Holborn,

JUNE 8. 1704.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK.

By *RICHARD WILLIS*, D. D. Dean of *Lincoln*.

GEN. XVIII. 19.

For I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.

THESE are the Words of GOD concerning *Abraham*, and are the Reason GOD assigns why He would not hide from him the Judgment He design'd to bring upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*; that *Abraham* was a good Man, and not only was Religious himself,

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but

but that he would also take care to propagate the Fear of GOD to Posterity; that he would instruct his Children, and those that belonged to him, in the Ways of the Lord, and would use what Authority he had to make them the Servants of GOD, as well as himself. And the Lord said, *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? for I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.*

FROM these Words I would take Occasion to speak of the Duties of Parents and Masters of Families, with relation to those under their Care, and endeavour to persuade them to imitate this of *Abraham*, which GOD mentions so much to his Honour; that they would make their Families Nurseries of Religion, and be careful to instil the Principles of Piety into their Children, and others under their Care and Influence.

I have made Choice of this Subject, as proper for the Occasion of our present Meeting together; for tho' our particular Design be only to encourage *Schools for the Education of the Children of the Poor*; yet the great Design of the worthy Persons concerned is, to endeavour to repair the Breaches made by the Wickedness of the present Age, by doing what they can that the next may be bred up better: The best Way to do this is, to lay the Matter upon the Consciences of all those who are concerned in the Education of Youth, Parents especially: And indeed if we cannot first make them sensible of their Obligations to take Care of their own Children, we shall hardly be able to persuade them to contribute much toward the Education of the Children of the Poor.

I shall

I shall therefore shew, *First*, What are the principal Duties of those that have Families, with relation especially to their Children, in order to breed them up in the Fear of GOD.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to press this Matter upon their Consciences by Considerations both from their Duty and their Interest, which are both very much concerned in the faithful Discharge of these Duties.

AND then shall in the *Third* Place speak more particularly to the Occasion about which we are now met together.

I. I am to shew *What are the principal Duties of those that are Masters of Families, in order to keep up Religion in them, especially with relation to their Children, to breed them up in the Fear of GOD.*

I THEN, in general, it's the Duty of every Master of a Family to keep up the Worship of GOD in it, and to that end to have his Family frequently together, if it be possible every Morning and Evening, to joyn in Prayer to GOD for his Protection and Blessing; to ask such things as they stand in Need of either for Soul or Body; and to return him Thanks for such Mercies as He has bestowed upon them. Every Family is a little Society and Congregation, and has many common Wants to be supplied, common Blessings to be begged, and common Mercies to thank GOD for; they are all concerned in the Good or Evil that befalls the Family, and therefore ought all to join together in Prayers and Praises to GOD. Besides, there is a publick Homage, which all Societies owe to GOD; that his Authority should be own'd among them; that they should declare

their Submission to him, and their Dependance upon him, and that can hardly be reputed a Society of Christians which does not do this.

WE ought to consider also, that it is the Duty of every Master of a Family to see that those who belong to him serve GOD as well as himself; now this he cannot be so certain of, unless he make them join with him; by this Means he will use them to the constant Worship of GOD, and this is a very likely Way to create and keep up a Sense of him in their Hearts, who perhaps, if they were left to themselves, and never called together to join in his Service, would be very apt to forget him, and to live without GOD in the World. This is certain, that the best of us need be put in Mind of our Duty, and there is great Necessity of the frequent Returns of God's Worship, not only because this is a Homage that we owe him, but because without this, our Hearts will be apt to grow loose to Religion, and be possessed with the Thoughts of those things only which we see and converse with here; and it is therefore a dangerous thing to have Children and Servants live in such a Family, where they are not frequently put in Mind of GOD, and bred up to an Awe of him, by a constant Use of his Worship, and by a good Example in this Respect from the Master of the Family.

2. ANOTHER Duty of such Persons is, to instruct their Families in the Principles of Religion, especially their Children, who ought from their very Cradles to be trained up in the Ways of GOD, and be seasoned with such sound Principles of Piety toward GOD, of Temperance and Seriousness in the Conduct of themselves, and of Justice and Love toward their Neighbour, as may be of use to them all their Lives; and this should not be

done

done negligently, or only by Fits, but so seriously and constantly instill'd, as may make a strong Impression upon them, such as may enable them, with the Assistance of GOD's Grace, to bear up against all the Temptations they are like to meet with when they are sent abroad in the World at their own Liberty, and are from under their Parents or Masters Care.

WE cannot but be sensible what mighty Temptations young People in our Age meet with at their first setting out in the World; and therefore it is very often as much as Body, and Soul, and Estate too are worth, to have them well prepared beforehand with a good Knowledge and Sense of their Duty; which though it be not always effectual to preserve Men, for we see many that have had the best Educations afterwards fall off to vicious Courses, yet that is the best Way that we can take with them, and what very often has its Effect; but however it be, this is the most comfortable Way for the Parent, whether it succeed or not; if it do succeed, he has a mighty Pleasure to see the good Effects of his Care; and if it do not succeed, he has still the Satisfaction of having done his Duty, and that God will not require their Souls at his Hands, as he will do at the Hands of all negligent wicked Parents, who let their Children perish for Want of due Care.

THE Advice therefore I would give to Parents is,

I. To take Care from their Infancy to breed them up under as great a Sense, as possible, of GOD and Religion; and in order to that, to use them to the serious Discourse and Thoughts of another World: Inculcate therefore much into them, that this World is only a Place of Trial, where we ought to live as Candidates for Eternity; and that we must be happy or miserable for

6 *Dean Willis's SERMON,*

ever, according as we behave our selves here. Put them often in Mind of the All-seeing Eye of G O D, that we live always in his Presence, and that he as much sees us in all we do, or speak, or think, as Men can see what we do most openly; that if we venture upon a Sin because it is secret, and no mortal Eye can see it, yet however God is with us all the while, and looks on, and will one Day lay all open before Men and Angels. Such Thoughts as these, frequently inculcated upon tender Minds, not yet corrupted, will be very apt to create a religious Awe, and incline them to Seriousness and Consideration, and make them afraid of breaking G O D's Commands.

2. DON'T content your selves to have disposed their Minds to Religion by such general Considerations as those I mentioned; but endeavour, as they grow up, to give them as thorough an Understanding of the Principles of Religion as possible; and a great deal of this may be done, if well followed, before they are from under the Tuition of Parents; and tho' much of it should be only learn'd by rote then, and not be well understood, yet if it be but laid up in the Memory, Time will shew them the Meaning of it easily then, when they would not be at the Pains to learn it; or it may be ever to think of it, were it not put in their Heads before.

I don't mean, that I would have them taught the Niceties of Speculation or Controversy, which are so much brought into Religion, for that will not do them much Service; but to acquaint them as much as possible with the Christian Life, what are the things we must do to please G O D, and what it is CHRIST expects from us, in order to our going to Heaven; about the Love of G O D, and living by Faith, and submitting to the
Will

Will of GOD in whatever befalls us ; about the Nature of Prayer, what is necessary to make our Prayers acceptable to GOD ; how to hear the Word of GOD with Profit, and to partake worthily in the Holy Sacrament ; about Meekness and Humility, Love and Charity, Justice and Honesty, and the like. Such Principles as these would make them solidly and substantially Good, and insensibly use them to the Thoughts of that, which Men are very apt to forget, that Religion is not so much the believing such a set of Truths, as the living by such Rules as GOD and CHRIST have laid down for us ; and that all Pretence to Religion without this, is only a vain and a fond deceiving of our selves.

IF Young People, when they are thus well instructed in their Duty, and what that Holy Life is they vowed and promised in their Baptism, were, after that, at a competent Age, brought in a serious and solemn Manner to the Bishop to be confirmed, that is, to engage for themselves that they will stand to, and will keep their baptismal Vow, it is what, by GOD's Blessing, might have great Influence upon all the succeeding Parts of their Lives.

MANY Parents, it is very like, may not understand enough to instruct their Children in this Manner ; the Advice therefore I would give is, that they would consult with their Ministers, or other prudent and good Friends, what Book it is proper for their Children to read and learn in order to it ; only before let the Holy Scriptures, especially the New-Testament, be one.

3. ENDEAVOUR, as soon as possible, to break their Passions ; use them to be governed, and to submit patiently their Wills to yours. It is a dangerous thing, in many

Respects, to use a Child to have its Will; for this will make its Desires craving, and impetuous, and boundless; it will make it peevish and domineering, and uneasy to its self and all about it. This is certain, that the longer our Passions and Appetites have their head and govern, the stronger they will grow; and he that was never used in his Childhood to submit them to the Will of his Parents, will much less be able, when he comes to be a Man, to make them submit to his own Reason, or the Will of God. The great Disadvantage of Men is, that they live so long the Animal Life, before Reason comes to Maturity to be able to govern, in which time the Passions and Appetites are apt so much to get the upper-hand, that it is a hard Matter ever after to dispossess them; this ought therefore, as much as possible, to be redressed by the Care of Parents, or those that have the Government of us, to make our Wills submit to their Reason while we have none of our own; if this were well done, we might be delivered tame and pliable into our own Hands when we come to Age, and might, without any great Difficulty, keep up that Dominion which was so wisely procured for us. I believe I may venture to say it, that, generally speaking, a great Part of the Sins, and most of the Troubles we fall into in the Course of our Lives, come from the Want of due Care of breaking our Passions when we were young. And I have often wondred to see Parents lay such a Foundation of Sin and Misery for their Children, that for Fear, as they call it, of breaking their Spirits, they have encouraged them in a stubborn, obstinate Humour, in Pride, and Revenge, and Self-Will, that they make their Party good in the World, as they use to express it; which are Humours directly contrary

to

to the Spirit of Christianity, and the Way to make Men turbulent, and haughty, and ill-natured in the Course of their Lives; and as for making their Party good in the World, I would oppose against them the Saying of our Blessed Saviour, *Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth.* There are such Charms in *Meekness*, that they are apt to raise a Man more Friends, and to give him much more outward Quiet, than a blustering, haughty Humour; but however, *Meekness* will make a Man easie within; he shall enjoy what he has with a great deal of inward Quiet, and that is the Thing that must make a Man happy. We cannot but be sensible, that the greatest Part of the Troubles and Vexations of our Lives proceed from our not having our own Will, which the more craving and impetuous it is, the more vexatious it will be to have it contradicted; by which means we create our selves many Troubles, for the most Part as impertinent as we did when we cried for Playthings in our Childhood.

BUT I do not mean by all this, to encourage a sheepish Temper in Children, tho' I think that is better than the contrary Extreme; much less would I encourage Tyranny and Severity toward them, if they can be governed any other way, as I am satisfied they generally may be, if those who have the Government of them will but first learn to govern themselves, and be contented to take the Pains which is necessary to govern Children without Severity, and not be for taking the shortest Way with them; Tenderness is what is due to their tender Years, especially from Parents, who should love, and be beloved again; they should therefore watch over them, observe their Ways, and their Tempers, make them easie where they can, and where they cannot, endeavour to inform them

them of the Reason of it, and to make them sensible that the thing was not fit for them, but still to keep up their Authority, and let them see that they must be governed. Children have Sense enough to apprehend things sooner than we are apt to imagine, if the Matter be but rightly and calmly laid before them ; and they love to be so governed, and indeed it is fit that reasonable Creatures should be so governed, and this will use them to the way in which they ought afterwards to govern themselves, and is the likeliest Method to have lasting and durable Effects upon them, when their own Reason joins in the matter, as well the Reason of their Parents or Masters.

4. ANOTHER Duty we owe to our Children is, to give them a good Example, without which, as we shall have a secret Damp and Shame upon us when we go to correct or instruct them, which very likely will hinder us from doing it effectually ; so it will be very apt to spoil all the good Effects of it : An Example constantly before our Eyes, such as that of a Parent, must have a great Power, whether it be good or bad ; and Children have quickly Sense enough to discern it ; and therefore the same Advice or Correction, which from a good Parent would make them observant and cautious ; if it come from a bad one, generally only increases their inward Obstinacy, and teaches them early to make such Reflections as are not for the Parent's Advantage. It therefore concerns all such, as for their own Sakes, and Conscience of their own Duty, so also for the Sake of their Children, to have a Care of their Lives, and to set a good Example before them.

5. ANOTHER Duty of Parents is, to lay it more to Heart, and to consider more frequently how to procure
the

the Blessing of GOD for their Children, than how to leave them great Estates. It is without question the Duty of Parents to provide that their Children may live when they are gone, and in some Measure answerable to the Station in which they have bred them up; but the great Design of a Parent should be, to make them happy here and hereafter; now it is plain, that both these may well be done with a moderate Fortune, perhaps much better than a great one, which often exposes them to be a Prey to those who lie in wait for them, and to many dangerous and hurtful Lusts. The first Care therefore of a Parent should be, to procure GOD's Blessing on himself and them, by leaving them nothing but what is fairly and honestly gotten, and then, by Charity to the Poor, to sanctify what remains, which will not only be beneficial to his own Soul, but is the best way to procure a Blessing to all that belongs to him; for there is no Grace has so many Promises annexed to it as that of Charity. His next Care should be, to place them in such a Station in the World, not always where they may live greatest, or get the most Money, but where they may be the most happy, and live the most innocently, and may be most likely to do good, and be easie in the World while they live, and go to Heaven when they die.

6. THE last Duty I shall mention of Parents is, to pray for their Children, and that not perfunctorily, and of Course, as is commonly done when they ask Blessing, but seriously and heartily, and with Perseverance, because they always stand in Need of it; and effectual, fervent, and constant Prayer will prevail much; it will always prevail for our selves, to procure what is good for us; and is very like to prevail in a Parent for a Child,
in

in whose Welfare he is almost as much concerned as in his own; when we have done all we can for our Children, yet still it is the Grace of GOD that must govern the Heart. Be sure therefore to teach them to pray for themselves, and do you be urgent with GOD in their Behalf, and even then when you despair of doing good upon them any other way, pray for them, and weep over them, and GOD is so merciful, that it is very likely that will do at last.

THUS I have done with what I proposed to speak to in the first Place, *viz.* What are the principal Duties of Masters of Families with relation especially to their Children, in order to breed them up in the Fear of the Lord.

I proceed now in the Second Place, by some Considerations, to press this Matter upon their Consciences.

AND here methinks I need not say much; For if natural Love and Tenderneſs will not prevail in a Case wherein the Good of their Children is ſo much concerned, I don't know what will. 'Tis Love to their Children that makes them take ſo much Pains and Care to breed them up; to look after them ſo tenderly in their Infancy, to be at ſo much Charge and Concern for them through the whole Courſe of their Childhood and Youth, to watch and tend them in the moſt nauſeous Sickneſſes, to bear with their Follies and Impertinencies, to toil and labour, to be anxious and ſolicitous all their Lives, to ſettle them well in the World, or to leave them ſomething when they die; nay, there are ſome Parents that will venture to damn their own Souls, only to leave their Children great by ill-gotten Goods. And yet, alas! what does all this ſignifie to them, compared to that which I have now been recommending; they may be

be great and be miserable, miserable in this World, and what is worse, miserable for ever. But if we take care to give them that good Education I have been mentioning, it will be the likeliest Way to make them happy here, and to secure a happy State for them in the other World. And yet this may be done with much less Pains than what will procure them any considerable Convenience in this World. If you love your Children, then endeavour to do this for them, which is like to be the greatest Good you can do them; endeavour to make them good and wise, to be Members of CHRIST, and Heirs of Heaven, and then it will be well with them, let their Condition be what it will here. All Parents cannot leave their Children great Estates, or put them into honourable Employments; but they may all pray to GOD for them, and to the best of their Power, educate them in his Fear, which is much better than all worldly Greatness.

BUT I would recommend this Duty to you more particularly from these two Considerations, with which I shall conclude this Matter.

I. THAT to be careful of the good Education of Children, is the best way to have Comfort from them. If our Care have not its due Effect, though it cannot but be a great Trouble to a Parent to have a Child miscarry, yet, as I hinted before, there will be this Comfort, that it was not our Fault; and therefore GOD will not impute it to us: But, on the other side, if our Care do prove successful, as it is very likely it may, if rightly managed, there cannot be any greater Comfort in the World; such Children, as being good, will be, of all others, the most dutiful and respectful to their Parents, and more especially upon the Account of the great Care they

they had of them ; and such Children are not only an Honour to GOD, and an Honour to themselves, but an Honour to their Parents too. *Solomon* tells us, that Children are the *Crown of Old Age*, but good Children are a double Honour to it. Besides, it is a mighty Comfort to a Parent, to see a Child take good Ways, to see it like to do well in the World, and live handsomely, but much more, to see it like to live for the Honour of GOD, to do Service in the World, and to live so here, that it may be happy for ever ; and I am perswaded, there is not any Comfort in this World so great as such a Child. And careless, negligent Parents, little think what Opportunities they neglect of making themselves happy in their old Age, and what Anguish of Soul they treasure up against that time when they will most stand in need of something to comfort them, by neglecting their Children : What a piercing Consideration is it for a Father or Mother to see their Children, whom they love as dear as their own Souls, and who are indeed part of themselves ; I say, to see these Children good for nothing, but a Shame to themselves, a Shame to their Parents, and Pests of the World ; to see them idle, and debauched, and extravagant, or given to any other Wickedness, which makes them scandalous at present, and exposes them to the Wrath of GOD, and to all the Judgments he has threatned against Sinners : And to consider withal, that if they had done their Duty, it might very likely have been better, that they themselves have been the Means of undoing those whom they love most dearly, and that they cannot now reclaim them, or retrieve the precious Opportunities they had of doing it before ; these are very cutting Considerations, and if they do not bring down their Grey Heirs with Sorrow to the Grave,

Grave, yet however it will be a melancholy heavy Load upon them as long as they live.

THE last Consideration I would propose is this, That Parents, who let their Children perish for Want of due Care, are answerable to GOD for their Souls, and for the Mischief they do in the World, which might very likely by them have been prevented; and this is a Consideration should make negligent Parents tremble. And I would desire them to consider beforehand, what they will be able to answer when they must appear before the great Tribunal of Heaven, and the Fruit of their own Body, which perhaps they undid by too great Fondness, shall there turn their Accusers. This will be an amazing Scene indeed; it would be terrible enough to see those whom we loved so dearly in such an undone Condition; but to see them withal charging us as the Causes of their Ruine, and pleading against us before GOD, must needs strike an unspeakable Horrour into us. How will it pierce our Souls when we shall see them on CHRIST'S Left-hand ready to receive the Sentence of *Go ye cursed*, and they shall thus address themselves to us: *See now what a Condition your Neglect of me has brought me to. God committed me to your Care, and you took no Care of me then, when I could not take Care of my self, but let me go on in Sin, and contract such wicked Habits as have brought me to this sad State; why did not you instruct me better, and ply my Mind when it was tender, with the frequent Thoughts of these things we now see? Why did not you fright me out of Sin, by the constant Representation of this terrible time, and the sad things that are to follow? Had you done this roundly and frequently, I might*
have

have been now happy, and needed not stand trembling here to receive the dismal Sentence.

BUT this is so dismal a Consideration, that I can carry it on no further: To conclude therefore this Head in one Word, Consider often that your Children are like to be great Blessings, or great Curses to you. If you take Care to breed them up in the Fear of God, you take a very likely Way to make them the Staff and Support of your old Age, your Joy and your Crown, and which is better, the Joy of God and Angels; But if by your Neglect they fall into wicked Courses, they will be a Curse and a Vexation to you, and you will wish a thousand times they had either died young, or had never been born.

I have now done with the general Matter of my Text, which was to shew you the Necessity, and Advantages of a good Education, and the Duties of Parents and others concerned in it. And having done this so largely, there will be the less Necessity for enlarging much upon what remains, the Occasion of our present Meeting together; for if there be so great a Necessity of Parents taking Care of the Education of their own Children, it must certainly be a great Charity to do this good Work for those poor Children who either have no Parents, or whose Parents, by reason of Poverty, cannot do it for them.

To help forward this noble sort of Charity, there have been of late Years in and about this City above 50 Schools set up, in which are taught above 2000 Children of both Sexes, many of which are cloathed, and some wholly maintained; and we hear from many Parts of *England*, of the pious Zeal of well-disposed

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People in this matter; many Schools are already set up, and we expect daily to hear of more; and if we may judge by the Progress this good Work has made in the Course of a very few Years, we have Reason to hope for much greater Success both here and in the Country too.

THE Designs of the worthy Persons who have been the Promoters of these CHARITY-SCHOOLS, are chiefly these *Three*.

First, AND especially, to have the Children instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, as it is professed and taught in the Church of *England*.

2. To instruct them in such other things which may qualify them for honest Employments.

3. ACTUALLY to place them out to some Trade, or other way of getting a Living, as they shall be enabled to do it by charitable Contributions.

THESE are the good Designs proposed, which must require a very considerable Expence to carry them on, much more I am afraid than we shall be able to procure, so as to answer all the Necessities of this Kind; but however, in so good a Work it must be very pleasing to GOD to go as far as we can, tho' we can't do all that we would desire; And in Truth, I think we have reason to bless GOD to see such a Readiness in great Numbers of People to contribute toward this, and other charitable Designs now on Foot, notwithstanding the heavy Burthen of Taxes which we at present labour under; that as there are too many who do not abate at all of their Vanity, or their Vices, for the Taxes; so there are many others, who think they should abate any where rather than in their Charity. I hope we may look

upon this as a good Sign that GOD still intends Mercy for us ; that tho' there be a great deal of Wickedness among us, yet there are withal many good People in all Parts of the Nation, who have a Zeal for the Honour of GOD, and the Good of Souls ; who love good Designs, and do not spare either their Money, or their Pains, to carry them on. But to return, and consider more particularly that charitable Work about which we now meet together.

AND indeed, I scarce know any sort of Charity that is like to be so many Ways beneficial as this is. This is in the first Place a great Charity to the Souls of those poor Children that have by this Means the Benefit of good Instruction, of being taught early the Principles of their holy Religion ; which tho' it may not have always that good Effect we desire to see, yet it is the likeliest and the best Way that we can take to make them good Christians in the Course of their Lives ; nay, tho' they should, notwithstanding the Pains that has been taken with them, afterwards turn to wicked Courses, yet we are not to look upon that good Instruction, which they had, to be quite lost ; for if good Principles are well laid when People are young, those will be like good Seed sown, which may lie buried in the Earth for some Time, but will very likely rise again, and bring forth the desired Fruit. There will be something within to work upon the Conscience, which in due Time may awake them. There will be a good Foundation for the charitable Admonition of Friends, or Advice of Ministers afterwards. But it is the hardest Matter in the World to recover those that were never principled in their Childhood ; there is nothing

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within them to work upon, and they may afterwards hear Sermons all their Lives without either understanding or minding of them; and therefore when such People leave any Vice they were guilty of, it is generally but leaving one Vice for another; the Vices of Youth it may be for the Vices of Manhood; Prodigality and Luxury, for Cheating and Knavery; they may leave the Vices of Youth as that leaves them, but seldom leave the Spirit of the World as long as they live in it. Or if they do chance, by GOD'S Blessing, to be quite recovered from their wicked Courses, yet they hardly ever recover the Loss of being well formed in their Childhood; their Religion will still partake of that Defect, and be rather a general Amusement upon their Minds, or a blind Superstition, than a wise Sett of Principles, which shall have a settled and regular Effect upon them.

UPON all these Accounts you see what a great Charity this is like to be to the Souls of those poor Children; and I hope I need not use any Arguments to Christians to perswade them that what Good we do to their Souls, is the greatest Charity we can do for them.

BUT then in the *Second* Place, that other Part of setting them for honest Trades or Employments, and afterwards placing them out, is, in its way, as great a Charity to their Bodies, and perhaps their Souls too. The common Charities that People give are only the Relief of a present Necessity, and the Persons to whom they give them are perhaps on the Morrow in as much Want as ever: But this is a Relief for their whole Lives, if they will be but diligent and industrious; and takes them once for all out of the uneasy State

of Want, and Dependance upon other People, and places them in a way of comfortably providing for themselves, and it may be, in some time, of being charitable to other People; besides the great Advantage of being put out of the Road of all those Temptations to which Want, and Beggary, and Idleness, expose People; and being put into a State of honest Industry, which, with good Instruction going before, is very likely to make them honest, industrious, and useful Men.

AND this suggests another Consideration, That this will be a great Charity to the Publick, as well as to the particular Persons. The great Riches of any Nation flow from the industrious and working Hands in it; 'tis these that carry on the Variety of useful Arts and Manufactures, that make Riches flow in upon any People; and therefore whoever takes People out of an idle, vagrant State, or prevents their being in such a State, and puts them in a way of Work and Industry, is a great Benefactor to the Publick.

To conclude then this whole Matter, I would in the first Place address my self to those worthy Persons who have been the chief Managers of this good Work, whether as *Trustees*, or any other Way; What I have to desire of them is, that *they would not be weary in well-doing*, but persevere with the same Zeal and Integrity wherewith they have undertaken and carried on this Work so far. The Truth is, the whole Success of the Matter is like to depend upon this; for if the World sees a publick Spirit in the Thing, if they see the Children well instructed, and well looked after, and the whole managed with Care and Integrity, Charity will not be wanting. The great Danger therefore is

least your Zeal should cool in tract of Time, and things fall into a loose and careless Management, which, if it happen, will not only hinder any further Progress, but quite spoil the whole Design. I would not here make any Complaint of the Neglect, or ill Management of publick Charities; some have complained of it, and given it as a Reason why they would not leave any thing behind them to publick Uses: It is a deal of Pity that the least Umbrage of an Excuse should be given Men for the Neglect of so noble a Virtue as Charity; And I may very well apply to this, the Words of our Blessed Saviour upon another Occasion, *Wo be to them by whom these Offences come*; They certainly will have much to answer for, who do by their Neglect prejudice People against that which may be so much for the Good of their own Souls, and the Advantage of the World; And on the other side, there are very few Ways whereby we can do GOD and the World more Service, than by undertaking such Trusts as these for GOD's Sake, and managing of them with Diligence and Integrity: This is very proper Work for those, who, by the Case of their Fortunes, or other Circumstances of Life, are freed from the Necessity of spending all their Time in their own private Affairs: And methinks this should be good Diversion for them at some of their idle Hours; I am sure it is much more innocent Diversion, and what will be in the end more Satisfaction to them, than those in which Men too often spend their idle Time. But especially this will be very proper Work for those who have been serving themselves in the World a great while; it is very fit that, at least before they go out of the World, they should think of doing GOD some Service,

and not let the whole Work of their Lives be only for themselves and their own Families.

I would now in the last Place address my self to all those who are able to help forward this good Work by their charitable Contributions. Whoever reads the Scriptures cannot but know, that Charity is one of the greatest Duties of the Christian Religion; That our Saviour CHRIST has set before us a very Noble Example of Charity, especially to the Souls of Men; And that of all Virtues this is the likeliest to procure the Blessing of GOD to our Selves, to our Souls, and to our Bodies, to our Estates, and to our Children, and to every thing that belongs to us: But I hope I am speaking to those who need not now be informed how great a Duty Charity is; And I cannot but hope that I have already sufficiently shewed, that what I am recommending is one Part of Charity that does very well deserve our Care and Consideration, I must therefore now leave the Matter upon your Consciences. As for those who have no Children of their own, they may afford to be more liberal, as being free from the Charge of Maintaining and Providing for a Family; Providence seems to put the Children of the Poor more immediately under their Care, to which they have this further Encouragement, that for a little of what they have, and which they themselves do not much want, they may have the Prayers of those poor Children for whom they do this great Kindness, and who may in time come to be good Men, or Women, and do GOD Service in the World.

As for those who have Children of their own, they cannot indeed spare so much as the others may; tho' I doubt that the Pretence of Children is often made an

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Excuse for Want of Charity, further than it should be ; but of all Persons, those who have Children themselves, should have the most tender Sense of this sort of Charity ; The natural Love which they have for their own Children should suggest Thoughts of Charity for those of other People, which want the Blessings which theirs enjoy : In a Word, it may be that a little laid out with a compassionate Sense of the Wants of these poor Creatures, may bring the Blessing of GOD home to their own Families, and make what they do for their own Children more successful, as the Want of it may bring a Blast upon all their good Endeavours for them : GOD may perhaps in this Case measure to you by the same Measure you mete to other People ; and therefore since you cannot but be sensible, that when you have done all you can for your Children, it will signify nothing, unless GOD gives a Blessing to it, I hope that among other Methods you will take this, to endeavour to procure it for them ; And GOD grant that it may prove successful.





A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

M A Y 31. 1705.

Being T H U R S D A Y in W H I T S O N - W E E K.

By GEORGE STANHOPE, D. D. Dean of Canterbury.

L U K E X V I. 25.

— *Son, Remember that thou in thy Life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now He is comforted, and Thou art tormented.*



T the Beginning of the Chapter, Charity to the Poor is urged upon us in the Parable of the unjust Steward; from the mighty Advantages to be made of it, when the Treasures we are trusted with, which must shortly fail, and for the Management whereof we

we shall then be called to Account, are so wisely improved, as to secure for each Steward, faithful in his Charge, an Access into blisful and everlasting Habitations. With what Success the 14th Verse acquaints us; for *the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him.*

FOR reducing those Minds whom the GOD of this World had so desperately blinded, that Hopes and Rewards made no Impression upon them; our Lord hath next Recourse to Terrors and Punishments, that, if possible, they might be awakened by a Prospect of the dreadful Consequences, which Avarice, and Unmercifulness, and a selfish Principle and Spirit, would otherwise not fail one Day to bring upon them.

THIS Motive, as the former had been, is propounded by way of Parable. Which I the rather choose to lay before you, because, agreeably to the Skill of Him, who spake as never Man spake, even those Circumstances, which might seem meant purely to adorn, do yet contribute to the Strength as well as Beauty, and all concur in helping forward the main Design of this Representation.

CARRY your Eyes then from the 19th to the 26th Verse inclusively, and there you will see a rich Man introduced, wallowing in Wealth, and lavishly expending it in all the Follies of Pride, and Pomp, and luxurious Living: sparing no Cost for the Ornament of his Person, the Grandeur of his Port and Figure, or the gratifying of his sensual Appetites. His Habit is described by *wearing Purple and fine Linen*, and his Table, by *saring sumptuously every Day*. But still it seems his Care was to live to himself alone: For, in the midst of all this Profusion for the Superfluities of Life, he suffered not
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the Necessities of other People to make any Part of his Concern. Objects he wanted none: His own Gate presented him daily with a most deplorable one. A Beggar, who, to the Poverty of his Circumstances, had that yet more powerful Recommendation to Pity, the Misfortune of real Disability by Sicknefs and bodily Infirmities. This Creature was laid at his Gate *full of Sores*; and there he lay, that his Diseases and his Ulcers might beg for him. The Relief he expected was very inconsiderable, nothing that could streighten, or in the least take off from the State of this Great Man; nothing but what must be lost, if not disposed of to his Advantage: For what Request or Wish could be more modest, than the *desiring to be fed only with the Crumbs that fell from the rich Man's Table?* But of all other Afflictions, his utter Want of Friends seems to be most moving, none to care for, or to comfort him; none to dress his Wounds, or assuage his Pains; nay, so helpless was he, so perfectly destitute and neglected, that, as if he had already been, what he was hastening apace to be, a putrified Carcass, *the Dogs came and licked his Sores.*

YET all this had not Power to melt the rich Man into Compassion. He eat, and drank, and dress'd on still; saw not, or would not see, the dismal Spectacle; gave not one Morsel of his broken Meat, what Slaves, and Parasites, and Gluttony, and Revelling, could not consume, to support the drooping Spirits of a hunger-starved Wretch. Not one cast useless Garment out of all his gorgeous Wardrobe was spared to hide the Shame, or warm the fester'd Limbs, of naked *Lazarus*. Till, at last, worn away with Want and Anguish, Nature sunk under the Burden, and sigh'd out the miserable Remains of Life.

NOR could the rich Man's costly Abundance render him Immortal: a little while, and he was snatch'd away too. And now all the Difference visible, between this lately gay and pampered, and that poor macerated Carcass, was only a little empty Respect at going off the Stage; the solemn Pageantry of a pompous Funeral, the Formalities of a Mourning, the Bewailing of some few that lived upon his Table and his Vices; Whereas, the other stole as it were out of the World without Noise or Observation, and as he had lived unregarded, so he died unlamented.

THIS, I say, is the only Difference that appeared to Men: for Men use to look no farther than this mortal State. But our blessed Lord here hath opened a Prospect of another; One, that it concerns us to hold in greater Consideration, than all the Distinctions possible to be made by Birth, or Quality, or Fortune in the mean while; One, that endures, and cannot be undone again by any future Revolution. And, to the Intent this Account might be delivered with better Grace and more Authority, the boasted Father of those covetous *Pharisees* is brought in to assert and explain it. For, see the strange Reverse, and what a sudden Turn Death makes in Men and their Affairs: That patient starved Cripple finds a bright Retinue of Angels ready to convey him into Paradise; those Regions of Bliss, which are stiled *Abraham's Bosom*, from him, the Father, and renowned Example of the Faithful. The *Rich Man* also, we are told, *died and was buried*. A very emphatical Expression, intimating, that there was an End of all his Happiness. And well it had been, if there could have been an End of him too. But he also had proper Mansions, distant from, and as unlike those of *Lazarus*, as

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Lazarus's and his had been lately upon Earth. Torments and Flames are now his Portion; and never did that needy Wretch ask an Alms, with half that Vehemence, or in half that Distress, as he now implores Relief to be ministred by the Hand of that formerly despised Creature. For in the utmost Anguish *he cried and said, Father Abraham, have Mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue; for I am tormented in this Flame.* The Succour he entreated was, in Appearance, but a small Kindness, yet in his present Circumstances it would have been thought a very great one. But so were the Crumbs that fell from his Table heretofore, and as welcome would they then have been; yet they were asked in vain: and therefore his Petition now must meet with no better Success. And, if this appeared hard, he is put in Mind, that there was a Time when he had his Turn, and that *Lazarus* was not to be grudged his; that each had now their Recompence for the things done in their Body; and that the Recompence appointed to both was just. For the clearing of this Point is manifestly the Design of *Abraham's* Answer in the Text, *Son, remember that thou in thy Life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

THE Intent of which Words, and of my standing here to Day, will, I hope, be answered in some tolerable Measure, by offering to your Consideration,

I. *The Justice, nay, the Mercy of Almighty GOD in this and the like Distributions of his Blessings and Punishments.* And,

II. *Some*

II. *Some Inferences naturally arising from hence, and suitable to the Occasion of the present Assembly.*

I. I begin with the main Point, upon which it is fit your most serious Attention should be fixed ; That God, I mean, is just, nay, merciful, when in a future State, as in the Instance before us, the Rich and Vain pay so dear for their Prosperity ; and the Poor and Afflicted have so ample Amends made them for their Hardships and Sufferings, to which Need and Neglect had exposed them in this World. In order to a right Understanding and due Sense of which Dispensation, the following Particulars should be diligently observed.

(1.) *First*, That such Changes of Condition in a future State are by no Means a necessary Consequence of our different Fortunes in this. Nor does the Case in hand warrant us to infer, That every Rich Man here shall be *tormented*, or every Poor Man *comforted*, hereafter. *Dives* had received *his good things in his Life-time*, but they were not the true Cause of his Torments after Death ; *Lazarus* had received *evil things in his Life-time*, but neither were they the Cause of his Comforts after Death ; if considered strictly, and by themselves. The Occasions indeed of each they were, but their being even so much as Occasions was not a natural, but an accidental Effect, and depended entirely upon the Disposition and Management of the Parties concerned in them.

THE Rich Man laid it on thick in *Purple and fine Linen*, in Vanity and Pomp ; but the vast Sums thus squandered upon the Extravagance of Equipage and Apparel, some part of them at least, had he so pleased, 'tis sure, might have been laid out in clothing the Na-
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ked ; And, if he had done this in any becoming Proportion, his Riches could not have risen up in Judgment against him. He deck'd his Table too with costly Provision ; and thus, in Riot and Intemperance, 'tis probable, in splendid Entertainments and superfluous Delicacies, 'tis certain, he consumed those good Creatures of GOD, which he, who had received so very freely, ought to have given freely. But he might, instead of, or even with high Eating, have spared some little plain, and consequently cheap Sustenance, to refresh those hungry Bellies, which were in Effect charged upon him, by that liberal Providence, which brought them to want the Supports of his over-flowing Plenty, and laid proper Objects in his Way to shed it self upon.

NAY, though we should admit the very best of the Case, and better by much than this Parable represents it : Let us suppose him hospitable without Luxury, and splendid without Vanity, that both his Attire and whole Course of Living were agreeable to the Rules of Decency and Custom, and what the World would expect from his Quality and Estate : yet even thus were he very far from being without Blame. For the Poor have always a Right to some part of the Possessions of the Rich. And if this Man had not sinn'd in giving too much to himself ; 'tis plain he sinn'd in giving too little to others ; and worst of all, in giving nothing to such an Object as *Lazarus*. *Purple and fine Linen* may no doubt be very innocent ; but they can never be so to them, who without any manner of Remorse can see their Brethren lie naked, and shivering, and perish at their Doors. A sumptuous Table may be not only allowable, but often commendable, nay sometimes necessary ; but not to them, who grudge the very *Crumbs that fall from*

from it, to those pined Wretches, whose Necessities are so pressing, and their Requests at the same Time so modest, as to desire Crumbs only for their Comfort and Relief.

THIS Man then was punished, not for possessing much, no, nor for spending much; but for spending it in a wrong and an unprofitable Way. He laid all out upon that which was superfluous, and neglected that which was necessary. His Hand was always open to his own Vanities, and always shut to the Necessities of the Poor; so far from retrenching one needless Expence, as not to rescue a helpless Wretch from perishing, by that which could cost him Nothing. Thus it was Want of Bowels that condemned *Dives* to *Hell*, which had he had and exercised, the Riches he enjoyed had become Means of advancing him to a brighter Crown in Heaven. But Riches ought not to be blamed for the Abuses of them; for they are capable of being turned to good or evil Purposes, just as the Owners please. All this is clear from our Lord's Description of the last general Judgment. The Goats on the left Hand are supposed to have had the same Abilities and Opportunities of doing Works of Mercy with the Sheep on the right; and both were equal, so far as both were able. But the Difference between them lay elsewhere. The Sheep exerted their Power gladly: They fed, and clothed, and visited the distressed Members of CHRIST, and for so doing they enter into Life Eternal. The Goats did not make the like Use of their Power; and, because they might have done the same good, but would not, therefore they are doomed to everlasting Punishment.

THUS the Case stands again with Regard to *Lazarus*. Had he murmured and blasphemed, or for a

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present Remedy betaken himself to Lying, or Forgery, to Theft and Pilfering, to Tricking of Creditors, or any of those base and wicked Shifts, which we so commonly see Want drive Men to; his Evil here must have been worse hereafter. It was not Poverty alone could carry him into *Abraham's Bosom*; but Poverty adorned with a Mind and Life strictly honest, a Spirit meek and contented, resigned to G O D's Disposals, and humbly trusting in his Goodness, for a Recompence to be made in his due Time. Many no doubt receive *good things*, not in this Life only, but in the next too: and many likewise receive *evil things* in both. Therefore, when it is said, *Thou receivedst good things, and Lazarus evil things*; It is neither said, nor meant, that for their receiving them, one was tormented now, or the other comforted now; But those good things are brought to the rich Man's Remembrance, only that he might recollect, and see, and justify G O D's Providence in all his Dispensations: To make him sensible, how largely, even so ill a Man had shared in the Divine Bounty; and that those who have least of it in the next World, cannot fairly complain that G O D is their Debtor, when the whole Account is stated. And this is my

2. *Second Consideration* for evincing the Justice and the Mercy of G O D in the Case now before us. For He is certainly Just, who gives every one as much as his Due: And He is certainly merciful, who gives every one more than his Due: And it is no less certain, that both these things are done, as oft as wicked Men are prospered here, and *tormented* hereafter, or good Men afflicted here, and *comforted* hereafter.

AMONG several Arguments for satisfying our Doubts, with Reference to the unequal Distribution of temporal

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Blessings, this has not the least Weight ; That no mere Mortal is absolutely perfect, or even void of Sin ; and yet scarce any is so desperately abandoned neither, as not to have some commendable Quality, some Actions of a better kind, to temper and allay the Venom of his bad ones. Now Reason as well as Religion instructs us, that it becomes a holy and just Judge, to award a Recompence in Proportion to each Man's Deserts : So as that neither the wilful and open Violation of his Laws may pass unpunished ; nor the Observance of them lye overlooked and unrewarded. But then the same Degrees of Nicety and Rigour are not alike necessary in both these Dispensations. For in punishing, the Penalty ought not to exceed what may justly be inflicted ; because in such Case the Sufferer would receive Wrong. But in rewarding, the Bounty may exceed the Merits of the Cause ; and in remitting, the Offender may be spared a Part of what in Strictness the Judge could inflict : Because Mercy is the Prerogative of a Supreme Law-giver, and neither the Party, nor any other Person, is properly injured by extending it.

Now *Godliness*, we are taught, *is profitable for all things* ; it serves every Interest a good and wise Man can have ; as being encouraged by *the Promises both of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come* : Whereas a vicious Conversation is discountenanced by the Threatnings of both these Lives. So that GOD keeps his Word, if he reward or punish Men, in either Way or Place, provided what he sends upon them in each kind be correspondent to their Deserts, and his own Declarations. And of that we shall be able to make some tolerable Judgment, by applying these general Rules of Justice to the Matter in Hand, and setting the Beggar in

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the Parable, as a Specimen of good Men afflicted here, but comforted hereafter; and the Rich Man, of wicked Men prospered here, but tormented hereafter.

ALLOWING then to *Lazarus* all the forementioned Virtues for sanctifying his Poverty, all that were possible to be attained and practised in those trying Circumstances; yet *Lazarus* was a Man; and of all Men we know that they *have sinned, and come short of the Glory of GOD*, as of all Sin we know, that the *Wages is Death*. Such Death, as when opposed to eternal Life, must mean a State of endless Misery. If GOD then determine to punish for Sin, is it not kind and gentle to accept a temporary Pain, though this Calamity be present, rather than to reserve Men for an irremediable one, though that be distant and future? And if this Man, who is an Offender in some Points, be excellently good in the main; yet shall he be no Loser at last, nor have Cause to think any of his good Deeds neglected, provided effectual Course be taken for Amends to be made him in that unchangeable Condition. Now of this we have positive Assurance, not only from the Estimate made by *St. Paul*, Rom. viii. 18. *I reckon that the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us.* But more especially, from that over-ruling Goodness, which, the same Apostle observes, renders those Sufferings Instruments of our Happiness. For this is our Consolation, that our *Affliction is light*, that it is but for a *Moment*, that the *Glory* designed for our Retribution is a *Weight, a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. And lastly, that that *light Affliction worketh out this Weight* for us. And is it not now sufficiently clear, that both the Justice and Mercy of

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GOD are magnified, in that Adversity of pious Men, so largely paid, and improved to such vast Account. Nay, that even *Lazarus*, when thus comforted, had Reason to think himself liberally dealt with, notwithstanding all the *evil things*, which he did or could receive in his Life-time?

NOR is the Point less clear with respect to the other Branch of the Parable, wherein the rich Sinner receives *his good things* in present, and his Torments after Death. For those Torments are no more than the just Hire of an ungodly Life. The Blessings of this Life are promised indeed to Virtue, but it is to the sincere Pursuit and general Practice of Virtue. Where a very few good Qualities happen so to mingle, as to be vastly overpowered and out-numbered by bad, such Promises cannot take place. If then upon Persons, who incur the Punishment of this and another State both, those of another only are inflicted; this is an Act of Long-suffering: here are kind Invitations to Repentance, and Warning and Opportunities multiplied for escaping the Judgment of both. Thus the Evil they receive hereafter, is what such Men have deserved; and the Good they receive here, is more than they have deserved. This is Bounty and Mercy, and that to be sure is Justice: Especially when the Neglect and Abuse of Mercy add to the Measure of their Crimes and Condemnation. All which as it is agreeable to the Reason of the Thing, so for have thought implied in the Original ἀπέλαβες. The Word implying to receive, not so properly in the Quality of a Gift, as of a Payment: and, that each of the Parties to whom it is referred, had the utmost they could demand, or with any manner of Title expect.

3. *Thirdly*, There seems to be somewhat of a peculiar Force in that Expression, *Thy good things*; that is, such as Thou didst esteem good, and prefer above all others. For wicked and worldly Men set their Hearts upon the present, and contemn and even hold in Derision all future Advantages. So that G O D proceeds with such People, not only in the Methods of Justice strictly considered, but he complies with their own Wishes and Inclinations, and pays them such Coin as themselves choose to be paid in. If, at the summing up of the Account, this be found not to answer Expectation, they have none but their own Folly to thank for it; Which, in despite of all Warning to the contrary, will make a losing Bargain, and place their principal Happiness, where it is not to be found. But with how ill a Grace does any Man complain for being taken at his Word, and call it hard to miss of that Felicity, which himself hath obstinately thrust away from himself? Thus *Dives* valued Wealth and worldly Magnificence, and the Pleasures of Fleth and Sense, far before all the Blissess and Glories of Heaven; and he enjoyed the Fortune he would have carved for himself; *his good things in his Life-time*. *Lazarus*, on the other Hand, was content to undergo the Hardships of unpitied Poverty and Affliction, in Prospect of a Recompence after Death: And G O D gratified him in that better Thing which he had chosen; and the Event proved, that he chose wisely, and had not trusted, nor submitted, nor suffered in vain.

THE main Point resulting from the Text being by this Time, I hope, sufficiently proved; as to the Justice and Mercy of G O D in distributing the Blessings and Punishments of this and a future State: I proceed in

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the *second* Place to leave it upon you with some seasonable Inferences, and so conclude.

First then, We learn from hence, what mistaken Measures They go upon, who form a Judgment of their own or another's Happiness and Misery, by their different Fortunes and Stations in the World. For according to this Standard, who would have scrupled to pronounce the rich Man in this Parable most blessed, and *Lazarus* the wretchedest of all mortal Creatures? And yet, How distant had this rash Sentence been from the Truth of the Case? Alas! *The Fashio*n, says St. Paul, (or, as the Original hath it, the Scene) *of this World passeth away*. And an errand Scene it is indeed: a mere Theatrical Representation, all over Delusion, and Deceit. Upon this Stage of Life we see, we admire, we envy, a Person supporting the Character of a Prince; We put his Splendour, his Retinue, his Wealth, his Power, and large Dependencies, into the Idea of the Man; But when the Curtain is let down, and Death shall (as long it cannot be before it will) disrobe him, and strip off all that borrowed Lustre; this sets us right, and disabuses those false Imaginations, with which the solemn Pageantry of Forms, the Glitterings of Greatness, and the Distance of universal Obeysance and Respect had blinded us before. 'Tis then we see the Man as he is; and till this Change be made, we judge in the Dark. For he alone is great, whose naked Virtue merits our Esteem. He alone rich, who is so towards God and in good Works. He only happy, who shines by his own Light: A Light, not like this Squanderer's, that dazzles Mens Eyes a while, and sets in utter Darkness: but which, like that of *Lazarus*, rises from the midst of Obscurity, grows strong and bright, and, when

eclipsed

eclipsed by Death, emerges from the Grave into perfect and eternal Day.

2. *Secondly*, Here is Comfort and Encouragement for those of our Brethren, whose Circumstances are streight and low in the World. This Passage shews, they shall not always be forgotten; But, if their Poverty be sustained with Patience and Contentedness, and Trust in a good *G O D*, there is a Time coming, when He will not neglect them, though Men may. And they, who so haughtily and coldly look down upon their Sufferings in the mean while, may one Day find cause to envy their Happiness. For when the gay, but fleeting Vanities of this World shall be reduced to a Coffin and a Shroud; when Pomp and Honour vanish like a Shadow; when proud hard-hearted Wealth lies covered in the Dust, the Pity, or the Scorn and Curse of Survivers; then shall the godly Poor be taken up by Angels, and carried into Rest from Grief and Labour, to Mansions of Peace and Joy, and Glory everlasting.

LET this then, my Friends and Brethren, on whom the World hath frowned, let this support your Spirits, and soften all your Difficulties and Toils, that *G O D* hath chosen the honest and pious Poor for his own; and, provided they be rich in Faith and Virtue, without any Distinction of Quality or Fortune here, hath made them equal to the greatest of the Sons of Men, and vested them in the same Title to the same Inheritance, and every precious Promise which his blessed Gospel hath any where made to them, who best love, and are best beloved by Him.

3. BUT above all, in the *Third* Place, the Rich should take this Warning, to use their Plenty wisely, and profitably: lest either their Luxury and Vanities,

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if it be employed amiss; or the intemperate Love and Rust of this Talent, if not employed at all, be a Witness against them in the last Day. This Parable casts no Reproach upon the Rich Man, for raising his Estate by unjust and fraudulent Methods, or for not paying punctually for all his gay Cloathing and sumptuous Table. And yet supposing him the fairest Dealer that ever lived, this single Fault of Hard-heartedness, and not distributing to the Necessities of the Poor, was sufficient to consign him to the Flames of Hell. So true it is, that they, who fall into Temptation by Wealth, perish by a Snare of their own laying; and that it is not Money, but the Love and the Abuse of Money, which is the Root of all Evil. For Good This may do much: Much to other People, more to the Owners; and therefore they who have the Power and Means, must look well to it, that the Inclination be not wanting. Which Want must indeed be inexcusable especially when such Opportunities for improving, and such Objects for inviting the Exercise of this noble Grace of Charity, are plentifully and perpetually offering themselves, as that which I am now come hither with a Purpose of recommending to you.

THE Expedient I mean for this Purpose is that of contributing to the necessary Instruction and pious Education of those, whose tender Years are the proper Season of receiving, and yet whose mean Circumstances expose them to this greatest of all the Miseries that attend low Fortune, that they are disabled from procuring, at their own Expence, the Knowledge requisite to make them happy in this, or in a better World.

THIS is to imitate the Example of that blessed Redeemer, whose unspeakable Goodness, in sending

us the Light of his Holy Spirit, we have now lately been commemorating. And how can we express our Thanks more pertinently, than by partaking in his glorious Work, and helping forward the Design of those Gifts, *by giving Light too to them that sit in Darknefs*: A Darknefs, the more deplorable in Them to endure, the more blameable in Us to suffer still upon them, who live under the brightest Shine of the Gospel, and lack only Opportunities of letting in that Light upon the Poor and Ignorant, which sheds its Rays so plenteously in our Church and Nation, and ought, so far as in us lies, to be communicated to every Soul among us.

It is not therefore a Knowledge of empty Speculation, or wanton Curiosity, that I stand here an Advocate for. Such as may render the Youth brought up in it pragmatistical and busie, dangerous and troublesome to others, or disposed to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think; But it is a Knowledge tending to make them just and peaceable, useful and industrious; necessary to qualifie them for getting their daily Bread, and even more necessary than their daily Bread. By this, they will be enabled to support themselves; by this, to requite the Care, and to assist the Poverty of their Relations; by this, instead of becoming an unprofitable Burden, to bring Advantage to the Publick in honest Labours and serviceable Trades; and which is best of all, and a more truly Christian Consideration than any of the former, by this, they will be taught to use the World, as not abusing it; to be faithful and strictly true in all their Dealings; to renounce the wicked Arts of Dishonesty and Deceit; to know, that the whole Earth, could they possess it by
sinful

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sinful Courses, is an Exchange not worth the losing their Souls for: In short, by this they will be guarded from those Temptations, to which Want, or Ignorance, or Idleness, lays Men open; delivered from the Scourge and Gibbet; the lewd Lives, and the shameless Deaths, of which we see and hear so many lamentable Examples in and about this City, and of which too so many Wretches, with their dying Tears, ascribe the Cause to want of that Education, in a Life of Diligence and Business, and of that early seasoning with Principles of Religion and the Fear of GOD, which the Charity I am exciting is intended to make effectual Provision for.

It were easie to enlarge upon these Motives, longer than your Patience ought to be exercised, and yet I durst promise my self as favourable a Hearing upon this, as upon any Subject whatsoever. For I remember where I am; In an Audience of Persons, whose own Experience hath taught them the Happiness of early and pious Instructions; Of Persons, who need only be put in mind of Things, which others should have been informed in. You therefore, my Brethren, are, I hope, duly sensible, that when our Lord declares, that we shall have the Poor always with us; he does not foretel this as a Burden, but promise it as a Privilege. You know what Profit may be made of this, and that the Good we do to them is doing the greatest Good to our selves. But, in regard the Necessities of our Brethren will far exceed the Abilities even of the most bountiful Giver; the giving what we can in such Manner as may turn to best Account, is every wise Man's Care. And the little already spoken will suffice to shew, that few, if any, Instances of Charity, can propose to themselves nobler
and

and more beneficial Fruits, than this of Instructing the Children of the Poor. That, even cloathing the naked, and feeding the Hungry, come short of cloathing the Body, and feeding the Soul at once; That the Supply of a present Exigence is not to be named with empowering Men to supply the Occasions of a whole Life; That a Gift restrained to one private Person is of no Consequence, like that which results to the Good of the Publick; But especially, that the shielding Men from Penury, and Cold, is a Benefit of short Duration, whereas the providing for Youth destitute and forsaken, to be made painful Labourers, honest Men, and sound Christians, is a rescuing an otherwise easie Prey out of the very Jaws of the Lion; 'tis a laying the Foundation of so many living Monuments of our Charity, enlarging the Dominion of our great Master, and multiplying the Number of the Blessed above, by these Monuments, which shall not only stand, but be inexpressibly happy, to all Eternity; and these will add, no doubt, to the Degrees of Our Joy, by the pleasing Reflection, how instrumental we have been to Theirs.

THESE are the genuine Fruits naturally springing up from a Charity of this Nature, prudently managed, and diligently improved. And herein you have this Day Demonstration, and all possible Encouragement; from the Care of those worthy Persons, who condescend to undertake this Trust, from the industrious Application used in the teaching Part, from the good Proof already made, and the much more that may reasonably be hoped, in those who are Partakers of this Liberality: especially from the extending the like Assistances to a competent Number of the Female Sex. A Design at least as useful, at least as necessary, for Them, as for the Males.

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For this will guard such against those Vices, which are the greatest Reproach to their Sex, the greatest Corrupters of the Age, and will inspire them with that Modesty and Purity, which may preserve them chaste Virgins, faithful Wives, devout Matrons, and instructive Mothers. And, of how great Consequence this must be, a little Reflection may serve to satisfy us. Since in all Families a considerable Part, and in those of meaner Condition, almost the whole Care of the Children cannot but lie upon the Wife. For, while the necessary Labours of Life employ the Husband abroad, her Charge is properly those within Doors. And, whoever takes the Pains to observe it, I believe will generally find, that the Beginnings of Virtue and Vice in Children, and their early Growth in either, are chiefly proportioned to the Piety and Capacity, or to the Neglect and Ignorance of the Mother and Mistress of the House. And in an Age and Nation so profligate as ours, where such Numbers of Sinners, harden'd and old in their Shame, seem past reclaiming, by any humane Methods; What can we do better, than to double our Care for Posterity, and try, if possible, by mending the next Generation, to repair, as much as may be, the Scandal of the Present? Thus shall we not only take up those whom their indigent Fathers and Mothers forsake, but derive Blessings of Religion down upon the Children which are yet unborn.

Thus have I very briefly set before you the Excellence and the State of that good Work which I am called hither to recommend. The God of all Grace stir up, every Day more and more powerfully, that Spirit of Piety and Charity, which hath of late so successfully shined forth in these two Noble Cities, and diffused

fused it self so happily through several Parts of the Kingdom: May every where a plenteous Harvest daily grow from the Seed thus sown; Men honest in their Principles, industrious in their Calling, pious and peaceable in their Conversations, serviceable Members of the State, zealous Sons of the Establiſh'd Church, and when they come up, Fathers careful to teach their Children the same. May you of these Cities in particular feel and see the desired Effects of this *Labour of Love*; and may you open your Hearts and Hands wide, in Proportion to so pious, so beneficial a Work: May you open them so wide, that as oft as hereafter there shall be Sermons on these Occasions, it may be proper to excite Others by the Example of Your Liberality, but needful only to put You in Mind of your own.

SPARE me but one Word more, with Respect to the particular Solemnities of this Day. Which I would gladly prevent being so mistaken, as if we meant by it to minister in any Degree to Ostentation and Vain-Glory. The Yearly Processions of these little Eleemosynaries ought not to be compared with the *Hypocrites Trumpet sounded before them in the Synagogues and in the Streets*. No. Even these are Acts of Charity also. Charity to Them, who at present subsist in some Measure upon this Bounty, by reminding them what Thanks they owe to GOD, what Improvement to their Benefactors, what Duty to their Governours: Charity to the Publick, while this goodly Sight and comfortable Hearing excite the Contributions of New, by the Examples of Former, and not by the Bounty only, but also by the Fidelity and Prudence of such honourable Almoners: Charity greatest of all to those Contributors, who shall be thus excited to so useful and excellent a Liberality.

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IF then your Riches and the Glory of your Houses be increased, remember how my Text reminds you, that you can carry Nothing away with you when you die, neither shall one Whit of your Pomp follow you. If any, like another Rich Man in this Gospel, *Luke xii. 16, &c.* be in Perplexity and Doubt, where to bestow his Fruits and his Goods, let him reflect upon my Application. Thence he will learn how little Need there is to pull down his Barns, and build greater, when now before his Eyes so many large and safe Store-houses stand ready provided to his Hands, where he may bestow, where he may lay them up for many Years, nay, where he may put out to the most growing Interest, with a most infallible Security to the Principal. For by these, and such other like good Works it is that Men lay up in Store for themselves *Bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens that faileth not, where no Thief approacheth, neither Moth corrupteth; but a sure Foundation of eternal Life;* which GOD give us all Grace to lay hold on, for his Sake, who hath decreed it to Acts of Piety and Mercy, and who himself vouchsafed to become Poor, that we by his Poverty might be made Rich; JESUS CHRIST the Righteous; To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit, three Persons and one GOD, be all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. *Amen.*





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. SEPULCHRE,

MAY 16. 1706.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK.

By WHITE KENNET, D.D. Archdeacon of Huntingdon.

PSAL. CXLIV. 12.

*That our Sons may be as Plants grown up in
their Youth; that our Daughters may be as
Corner Stones polish'd after the Similitude of a
Palace.*

Or as we read in our Daily-Service.

*That our Sons may grow up as the young Plants;
and that our Daughters may be as the po-
lish'd Corners of the Temple.*



THESE Words, or good Wishes, can no
sooner be recited at this Time and in this
Place; but that you your selves do point out
the immediate Application of them. And in-
deed I had rather directly apply them, than stay with
unne-

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unnecessary Labour to expound them. It is sufficient, and I thank GOD not improper to our present Circumstances, to observe, that King *David* had been lately bless'd with eminent Success and Victories abroad, and was now praying GOD to crown them with Peace and Prosperity at home. He begins the *Psalms* like a Song of Triumph over his Enemies; and ends it with a Supplication of Happiness to his own People. *Ver. 1, 2. Blessed be the Lord my Strength, who teacheth my Hands to war, and my Fingers to fight. My Hope and my Fortrefs, my Castle and Deliverer, my Defender in whom I trust; who subdueth my People that is under me: and so on, with the highest Expressions of Gratitude and Exultation. He breaks off the Rapture, and with devout Eloquence begins again, Ver. 9. I will sing a new Song unto thee, O GOD, and sing Praises unto thee with a ten stringed Lute. Thou hast given Victory unto Kings, &c.* Then the Royal Conquerour becomes a humble Petitioner to the King of Kings, that he would please to crown his Foreign Conquests with domestick Peace and Plenty, and all Manner of Felicity. The Foundation of all which was to be their Youth well educated, their Sons and Daughters virtuously and religiously brought up; for such is the Blessing implored in the Text, *That our Sons may grow up as the young Plants, and that our Daughters may be as the polished Corner Stones of the Temple. Or, as Corner Stones polished after the Similitude of a Palace.* There is no great Difference in the Translations, and possibly the old one is fit to be retained, the *Temple* rather than the *Palace*, if as the best Interpreters understand it, by the *Polished Corners* the Psalmist does mean those *Pillars* which supported the *Veil* of Cherubims, mentioned *Exodus* xxvi

31, 32. which were polished or overlaid with Gold, and did divide the Holy of Holies from the Body of the Tabernacle or Temple.

BUT this is certain, that in either Sense, the Psalmist meant to represent Children improv'd by Education under a Figure of *Grace* and *Beauty*, the natural Grace of thriving *Plants*, and the artificial Beauty of some glorious *Building*. Why our *Sons* are compared to the *Young Plants*, as if Nature were stronger and more self-sufficient in *them*? and why our *Daughters* to *polished Corners*, as if they wanted a more exquisite Art and Skill to improve and adorn them? This probably was never meant, and there should be no indulging of Fancy in interpreting the Word of GOD.

THE Words, without any straining, do contain this Proposition.

“OUR Children shining in their Native Sweetness, and especially adorn'd with a liberal Education, do make a very good and glorious Show: Nothing more comfortable to behold, than our *Sons* thus growing up as the *young Plants*, and our *Daughters* thus appearing as the *polished Corners* of a *Palace* or *Temple*.”

IN this World, the Theatre of GOD, there is a strange Variety of delightful Objects, that strike our Eyes with agreeable and even amazing Joy and Pleasure. And well may we Creatures behold and wonder, when these Things pleas'd the Creator's own Review: He *saw* his new born *Works*, and they all were *good*. But now among all the delectable Sightings that can fill the Eyes of Men; I believe none is more entertaining, more ravishing, than what we have now *before* us and *around* us. A dear and pretious Sight! Some Thousands of poor Children, arm'd with their own Innocence, adorn'd with

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your Charity, and above all, illustrated with the first Rudiments of Learning, Virtue and Religion! What Spectacle upon Earth can come nearer to that of a *Multitude of the Heavenly Host*? What more lively Resemblance here below of that glorious Appearance revealed to St. John, Rev. xiv. 1. of the many *Thousands with their Father's Name written in their Foreheads, singing as it were a new Song before the Throne, not defiled, for they are Virgins, following the Lamb, redeemed from among Men, being the first Fruits unto GOD and the Lamb.* A Congregation of these innocent ones is a goodly Sight to look, to feed, to dwell upon! A Sight that is enough to open the Eyes of Prejudice, and to strike Envy dumb! A Sight so endearing, at least so inoffensive, that disdain and ill Nature cannot blame it, can at worst but overlook it!

AND indeed in the Prospect of all Things under the Sun, the Wisdom of GOD has so adapted our Eyes to visible Things; that the *youngest* Creatures seem to have the most winning Beauty in them. The Lambs, the Kids, the *young ones* of every living Kind, have the Sweetness, the Prettiness in them, that please and charm far beyond what they do, when they grow up to Age, and (what we improperly call) Perfection. This holds in the very inanimate Products of Nature; the Bud and the opening Blossom have a singular Freshness in them, that on that Account delight us more, than the full-blown Flower or the riper Fruits. This joyful Spring does exceed in Glory the maturer Seasons that are following after. The *young Plants* in the Text are a better Figure of Decency, than when they come to spread into Boughs and Shade. Nay, it is in some Measure the same with the Works of *Art*, as with those of Na-

ture:

for POOR CHILDREN.

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ture: the first Draught and ruder Model do sometime hit us more than the perfect Operation; and the rising Structure does promise a Pleasure perhaps greater than we find in the finisht Building. There is a Reason for it, that the Beginnings of things are apt to raise our Imagination and our Hopes; when the Close and Period of them do seldom answer that great Image which we had formed in our Minds.

BUT I keep rather to the Instance here before us: These early Shoots of Mankind, these young and tender *Plants* now before our Eyes, must needs shed a sensible Pleasure upon all good Christians. And therefore I cannot but commend the Prudence of the Governours and Trustees of this Charity; that they keep up an Anniversary Meeting of these poor Children, to come from every Quarter of our two Cities, and their larger Suburbs, to walk in decent Couples thro' the Streets, led by the Ministers, the Pastors, as the *Lambs* of their Flock, and here at last folded as it were in the Courts of God's House: To see them cloath'd with Neatness, and set off with good Manners, and by Humility and Piety made all *glorious within*; to hear them reading the Psalms distinctly, making the Responses audibly, turning readily to the Chapters, reciting most perfectly their Catechism and some useful Exposition of it; and singing forth the Psalms and Hymns in a melodious Manner. O what a Christian Entertainment is this! A Spectacle far beyond the Vanities of the Stage or Musick House, or any worldly Pomp whatever!

THE *Papists*, whose Religion does consist much in Pageantry and Show, do make their solemn Processions in a various Order: but they have no Device so taking to the People, as *that* of young Children winged like

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Angels, and as it were flying along with *Hallelujahs* and *Hofannabs* in the Streets. Our plain Religion admits of no such ludicrous Pomp. The humble and unaffected Sight, that is this Day represented to you, does (I dare say) excel all those glaring Amusements of Popery. The Children are here shewn like themselves, in their own Simplicity, like pure and native *Lilies*, which for that Reason could outshine *Solomon* in all his Glory. We have wisely rejected the Superstition of our Fathers, who dress'd up their Children for a mock Procession upon the Festivals of *St. Nicholas*, *St. Catherine*, *St. Clement*, the *Holy Innocents*, and such like Days. Our Charity-Children are taught to make no other Appearance but that of Sincerity and Truth. In some of our Schools you may see them on a *Sunday* Evening at their Quarterly Exercises of Letters and Religion, in a most edifying Manner. Some of them are spelling the hardest Words with more Exactness than many adult Persons can do, who yet think themselves Masters of the *English* Tongue. Some are reading with such an Emphasis and clear Pronunciation, as may instruct, if not shame, those Men and Women who come to hear them. Others are making Speeches, or holding Dialogues, or by Turns rehearsing some chosen Parts of Scripture, or likewise reciting some particular Clauses in the Acts of Parliament restraining Vice and Immorality. And all with such an Air of Christian Breeding, that, I perceive gives a wonderful Satisfaction to those Friends and Neighbours, who so well spend the Evening of a Christian Sabbath. The solemn Service of the Church does not here admit such a full Trial of their Abilities; and yet they make a sufficient Proof even in these our public Assemblies; to which they are constantly brought

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and in which they learn to behave themselves with Awe and Reverence, under the Eyes of their Governours, and as in the Sight of GOD; Praying, Reading, Singing, Responding in so good an Order; that in many of our Churches, these Charity Children are a considerable Part, I had almost said the worthiest Part, of our Congregation; an Example to many of grey Hairs.

THIS goodly Appearance of the Children in our Churches has often raised up Benefactors to them. The Auditors have been so delighted with their good Performance, that they have gone home with Admiration, they have reflected upon it with a fresh Comfort; and so GOD has stirred up their Hearts to bestow some considerable Gift or Legacy upon them. I could give some Instances, and I hope to live (if it please GOD) to see many more. Who knows, but this Day, and this present Assembly, may afford an *Example* or two of some able and well disposed People, who may be so well satisfied with these Demonstrations of Innocence and Charity, that their Hearts may burn within them; and they may make a Vow unto GOD, to dedicate some Part of their Substance, living or dying, to this best of Works, The Education of poor Children.

My Brethren, There is an innate Force in some Objects of Pity and Compassion, that does attract our Eyes and very Hearts towards 'em. This attractive Force and Virtue is in no other deplorable Creatures, so much as it is in poor distressed Children; like the Needle to the Loadstone, we cannot but turn and point directly to them. Harmless as Lambs and Doves, they have no Arts in begging; they have no dissembled Tokens of Misery to impose upon us; they have no

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affected Clamours to over-bear us ; they have nothing but the Merit of a real Want, and a Patience to be reliev'd.

LET me put you in Mind, that by the
Ecc. Hist. Account of *Bede*, our oldest Historian of any
Lib. II. Credit, the Conversion of our *Saxon* Ancestors
Cap. I. was in great Measure owing to this sensible Cause ; I mean, to the charming *Sight* of poor *English* Children. For he tells us, that *Gregory* the Great, before his Advancement to the See of *Rome*, happened to spy some Boys of this Country expos'd in the Market among other Captives to Sale : and, upon Enquiry, understanding they were Pagans, he sigh'd to think, that the Prince of Darknes should possess such clear and bright Souls ; and that Bodies of such a fair outward Aspect should have Minds void of all inward Grace and Goodness : And then alluding to the Similitude of those our *Angles* and the *Angels* above, and other Words of Affinity in Sound, the Wit of that Age ; He took up a Resolution of sending Missionaries to convert the *English* Nation ; which was soon after accomplished under *Austin*. If this were a *Monkish* Fable, it would however bear this Moral in it, That the very Sight of hopeful and destitute Children, must needs raise our Pity and Concern for their Souls ; and dispose us to help bring them out of Darknes unto the Light of Knowledge and Salvation.

AND let this suffice for our first Observation from the Text, that " Our Children shining in their native
 " Beauty, and especially adorn'd with a liberal Educa-
 " tion, do make a very good and glorious Show : No-
 " thing more comfortable to behold, than our Sons thus
 " growing up as the young Plants, and our Daughters

" thus

“ thus appearing as the *polished Corners* of a *Palace* or
“ a *Temple*.

II. I should proceed in the second Place to recommend
some of the “ Benefits and Advantages of thus provi-
“ ding for the better Education of Children ; which must
“ be implied in this affectionate Wish, or rather this
“ importunate Prayer of King *David*, that our *Sons* may
grow up as the young Plants, and that our Daughters
may be as the polished Corners of the Temple.

AND here, to avoid the confounding a Multiplicity
of Blessings, I shall speak briefly of those Benefits or
Blessings in Respect of Children themselves ; and then in
Respect of Families, Parishes, and Kingdoms.

First, IN Respect of *Children* themselves : How is
Man born but like a wild *Ass's Colt* ? Job xi. 12. And
what is it, that is bound up in the Heart of every Child,
but such a Ferity and Foolishness that must be fetch'd
out by Instruction and Correction ? For this excellent
Purpose, Prov. xxii. 15. It is good for a Man that he
bear the Toke from his Youth ; and that he be trained up
from a Child in the Way that he should go, that when he
is old, he may not depart from it.

YOUTH is the Seed-Time of good Principles and
good Conversation ; if this Season be altogether lost, the
good Soil must become barren, or be curst with Thorns
and Thistles. The first Rudiments of Letters are hardly
attainable but in Childhood ; when People grow up in
Ignorance of them, not one of a Thousand can recover
the lost Opportunity. However acute in other Matters,
they are dull at this ; as if Providence would chastise
Mankind for offering to change the appointed Seasons
of Learning, with the same Kind of Justice by which

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Men are left Reprobates, who dare to trust to a late Repentance.

THEREFORE the Parts and Capacity of every Man or Woman, do in great Measure depend upon an early Education bestow'd upon them. There may be a rare Instance of one or two in an Age, who shall emerge from the Difficulties of an ignorant and mispent Youth: and even those *few* shall be continually complaining of that Misfortune, and shall be casting the Reproach of it upon their careless Parents, or other Friends unmindful of them. I cannot say, that all Souls are at first equal in Activity and Power; there may be finer or courser Threads of Life from the very Birth and natural Constitution: But certainly, a great Difference does afterward arise from the good or ill Management of Infant Souls: The Inclination to Heaviness and Dulness, may, for Want of Refinement, settle into perfect Dross and dead Matter; and even a Quickness of natural Parts, left naked in the Hands of the World and the Devil, may have but a sharper Edge to Vice and Folly.

YOU therefore, little Children, who are born of meaner Parents, rejoice in this, that GOD provides you Friends better than your Parents, Charitable Friends, who cloth your Bodies, and new dress your Minds and Souls; who timely remove you, *O young Plants*, into the best Nurseries of Learning and Religion, to be there *watered* by your Teachers, till GOD shall give you a full *Encrease*. If ye want Judgment now, to prize this Blessing, yet, within the first Years of your Discretion, ye will congratulate your selves, and bless GOD, and praise your Benefactors for it. You will come to say, Oh what had we been, if left unto our selves, and to

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our Parents unable to help us! Left to play in the Streets, and to linger and pilfer from Door to Door! What had we been, when come to Age, but the lowest Servants, and hardest Labourers; or perhaps idle Wanderers and Beggars, or possibly strouling Thieves and Robbers! But we adore the Mercy of G O D, that when as to any schooling or breeding, our *Father* and *Mother* had *forsaken* us, then did *God take us up*, and commit us to the Care of many good and generous Christians, who maintained us at their CHARITY-SCHOOLS, till we were fitter for the World, and can now live comfortably and creditably in it. We praise the Lord, and can never forget this Benefit bestow'd upon us.

II. *BUT Secondly*, This good Education of Children is a mighty Blessing in Respect of the *Families* to which they belong.

I might here lead you into a Connexion of many Truths; As *First*, That it is the Ambition and Glory of honourable Marriage, to be bless'd with Children and the Fruit of the Womb; and yet that Blessing does not depend on the Birth, so much as on the good Breeding of them. And *Secondly*, It is the natural Inclination of all Parents to love their Children; which Love can be express'd no better Way, than by a tender Regard to their vertuous Education. And *Thirdly*, It is a laudable Kind of Instinct in all Parents, to provide and lay up for their Children; and yet to bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, is the best Portion, the truest Provision they can make for them. Again, *Fourthly*, It is the Hope and the Zeal of all Parents, that their Children may continue and preserve their Name, and carry it down to Posterity in some Credit and Reputation; which cannot well be expected

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pected without a right Foundation laid in the good Government and Improvement of those Children. And I might, *Lastly*, observe, that the Peace and Quiet of all Families does so much depend upon the good Discipline of Children, and upon reforming the Humours and natural Infirmities of them; and above all, the Satisfaction of Parents is so very sweet in seeing their Children do well in the World; and, on the contrary, their Grief and Vexation are so very piercing at their Miscarriage in it; that it must needs be the principal Interest, as well as Duty of all Families, to have the Children within them carefully brought up to Letters, Manners, and Conscience, that shall be all useful and good. These Things I can only hint, and recommend to your second Thoughts at some other serious Time.

My Eye and Heart are upon the *poor Children*, and I am satisfied that their good Education is a singular Benefit to the meaner Families and Friends they belong unto. Not only, that it is a sensible Ease and Pleasure to the indigent Parents, that the Burden of a Son or Daughter is taken off their Hands, by Cloaths and Schooling providentially given to them; but on many other Accounts. The Parents can more easily command their Children, when they come back from School accustomed to Awe, and Reverence, and dutiful Subjection. And they can trust them upon any Errand, or in any Place, when their Church Principle and their Practice at School has been, to keep their Hands from picking and stealing, and their Tongues from lying and all evil speaking. The Parents have some Comfort in these sanctified *little ones*, to hear them pray, and read, and rehearse, and sing; why, it turns their poor Cottage into a Sort of *Temple*, and in the happy Reform of
their

their own Children, they do as it were *receive Angels unawares*. By this Means, to my Knowledge, some Parents have been regenerated and born a-new by the Influence of their own Flesh and Blood. To see their Children between the School-Hours, delighting in their Books and Lessons at home; This by Degrees has turn'd the Hearts of the Parents the same Way; They have recovered their lost Reading, and have been restor'd to the Knowledge and Practice of Morality and Religion. I have heard of some poor Families, almost Heathenish, and without GOD in the World, where the profane Parents being pleas'd and overcome with the sweet Devotions of their Children, have themselves learned to serve GOD in their Houses by daily Prayer: So great *Strength* has GOD *ordained* out of the *Mouths* as it were of *Babes* and *Sucklings*. Nay, and the Parents who thus receive a spiritual Blessing from their Children, may likewise partake of many *temporal* Comforts from them: To see them transplanted in order from the CHARITY-SCHOOLS into sober Families, and put out to convenient Trades and Callings; This must be a new Joy to the insufficient Parents; who could not so well dispose of them; and they are already supported with the Hopes of what they may live to enjoy: A Help and Allowance from those their Children, as soon as they thrive and prosper in the World.

III. *Thirdly*, The Advantage of Childrens Education is very great, in Respect of those *Parishes* wherein they are born and bred.

It is a wise and happy Frame of political Constitution, that our Kingdom is divided into Parochial Bounds and Districts; as a large Body into Members, where
every

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every Part must adorn and defend the whole. These Parishes have their Peace and Welfare very much depending on the Behaviour of younger Persons. The greatest Disorders in any Neighbourhood do most commonly proceed from the Folly of Children, or the Rashness of Apprentices and Servants, and the like greener Heads. It is *their* Quarrels taken up by those who should be wiser, that most frequently create the Strife and the Variance in this City. Wherefore if all this young Brood were trained up in a strict Fear of God, and a humble Deference to their Superiours; It would very much tend to keeping the Peace, and promoting the Prosperity of every common Place of Habitation. Especially as to meaner Families, the Children of the Poor are too naturally the Nuisance of our Streets: They must be so, if suffered to be idle, and ignorant, and vicious: They must be Vermin, preying upon nobler Creatures. And how shall we prevent it? The Laws indeed reasonably enforce each Parish to maintain their own Poor, but this Maintenance is extended chiefly to the old and decay'd People; the *Children* are often thrown upon the wider World; or if there be Law sufficient for their Bodies, and to keep them from starving, yet there is no ordinary legal Provision for their Minds and Souls: That better Part of them is still exposed to be found brutish, and in a manner void of Understanding. The happier Use and Benefit of our CHARITY-SCHOOLS, where this Defect is so honourably supplied; where our voluntary Contributions do fill up the Measures that must of Necessity fall short in our stated Rates and Taxes. What Mischiefs would otherwise threaten, and unavoidably fall upon every populous Parish? The poor ragged Children would swarm like Locusts in our Streets,

Streets, and by playing about, with Lies, and Oaths, and filthy Language in their Mouths, they would corrupt the Children of the better Sort ; and by an early Entrance upon pilfering and sharpening, they would grow up into a Habit of profess'd Stealing, in all the Mysteries of it, from Picking of Pockets, to Shop-Lifting and House-Breaking ; wherein their Practice no doubt would lie most in those Streets, and at those Doors and Windows, with which they have been acquainted from their Childhood. Or if, in Spite of Temptations, such ignorant Children should happen to be honestly dispos'd, yet at best they would sink into a lazy and loitering Kind of Life ; and at last, by a numerous Offspring, or by Sickness, or at farthest by old Age, they would become a Burden to the Parish ; and so every Generation would encrease that Charge, which is already complained of as too great and grievous to be born.

THE more Thanks is due to the publick Spirit of those Persons, who have cast in the *Salt* at the Fountain Head, to heal the *Waters* that were *nought*, and the *Ground* that was *barren*, 2 Kings ii. 21. I mean, the worthy *Citizens*, who begun this laudable Institution of CHARITY-SCHOOLS. Wherein the Children of both Sexes are now *redeemed* from the Curse they before lay under, are now put into a new World, another Course of Piety, Honesty, and Industry, wherein, by GOD'S Blessing, they are now likely to be no longer a Stain and a Load upon their Birth-Place, but a Service, and an Ornament, and perhaps perpetual Benefactors to it. For I doubt not, but some one Charity-Scholar or other here present, will arise into a Figure in the World, and will have a grateful Soul, and he or she will remember and reward the Place of their Birth and Education.

IV. *Fourthly,*

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IV. *Fourthly* and lastly, the Benefit of good Education does spread farther, and extend it self unto the whole Kingdom.

OF which there needs no Proof: For a *Kingdom* is but a Collection of Families, and Parishes; and whatever is a domestick Comfort and a parochial Interest, must be a National and Universal Good: Whatever strengthens the Members, must needs invigorate the whole Body. But there are some peculiar Advantages to the Common-Wealth. All Government must subsist by Unity, Order, and Peace. Now if Children, by timely Discipline, are made tractable and obedient to the Advice and Authority of their Parents and Teachers, they are then fitted to the Hands of other lawful Rulers; and the Church and the State will be as quiet as were the Family and the School. But if a perverse Will and selfish Humour, if Ignorance, Rudeness, Pride and Folly be suffered to take Root in our neglected Youth; then will the same Weeds appear in every other Age and Station, and the *twice Children* will be ever wanton, and uneasy, and rebellious, under the best of Governments. Worthy Citizens, We cannot be too populous, if we are not tumultuous: It is ill Education that maketh only a confused *Multitude*: There must be right Breeding to form the regular *Company* and *Society* of Mankind. So wild Nature maketh out a Wood, and a Forest; but Care and Cost must raise and preserve the decent *Walks* and *Plantations*. So Herbs and Flowers may have a faint Lustre in Fields and Hedges, but the inclosed *Gardens* only can improve them into Order and perfect Beauty. In like Manner, Schools and Appartments of Instruction are the Seminaries and the Nurseries of every Common-Wealth,

to

to dispose and prepare Mankind for publick Ornament and Service.

HENCE to neglect the Education of Youth, is a sort of Plot against every Government, and may work a slow and sure Destruction to it. It was upon this View, that in one of the *Grecian* States, a Law is said to have obtained; That whatever Parents spent their Revenues upon their own Lusts, without allowing a competent Share for the suitable Breeding of their Children, their Estate so abused, was sequestred to the Government, and they were to bring up such neglected Children. Did it become me to say what Laws we want; I would presume to say, that we stand in need of such a *Law*, that if Parents will not bestow Education upon their Children, when they are able to do it, their Income (or at least a sufficient Part of it) should be assigned to the Publick, in Trust for Breeding up the innocent Children.

BUT even that Law would not reach to the destitute Families, that cannot possibly afford to bestow this Blessing on their little ones. No *Law* but the Royal one of *Charity* can reach home to the Children of our poor and needy Brethren: And therefore to provide free Learning for these forsaken Souls, was always thought an Act of Generosity and Bounty. It was this Sense and Zeal that at the Beginning of our Reformation, inspir'd so many *English* Patriots to found *Grammar-Schools*; till their Charity this Way began to run into a sort of Excess, and almost bordered on the former Superstition of founding Cells and Monasteries. The Intention of multiplying these Grammar-Schools was no doubt good and honourable; that such a Number of poorer Children might have Learning *gratis*, and an Oppor-

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Opportunity be opened unto all the neighbouring Youth. But here lay the wrong Turn; The Masters of those Schools set up for *Greek* and *Latin* only; and so their Dispensation excluded one Sex altogether, and was indeed too high for the meaner Boys, born to the Spade and the Plough; if these were admitted, it gave them such an imperfect Taste of Learning, as when they were called out to Labours, and lower Trades, did but fill their Heads with Noise, and help to make them more vain and conceited. I must say, that for *Schools* of this Nature we have enough, and many of them excellently governed. If any worthy Persons be now inclined to Erect and Endow any School, it should be, in my Opinion, an *English School*, a Provision for Teaching the Children of the Poor their Mother Tongue, to know their Letters, to Spell, to Read, to Speak, to understand their Bibles and Prayer-Books; and so proceed to Write, and to cast Account, and to know the common Forms of daily Business in a Family, a Shop, and a Parish. *These* are the plain Accomplishments that (without a Syllable of learned Languages) would best become the Generality of People, and make them most useful in their Generation.

AND therefore this is the very Method of our CHARITY-SCHOOLS, and renders our ordinary Children most fit for Services and proper Employments in the World. Ye are all sensible of it; if you want a Boy or a Girl for a Servant or Apprentice, where shall a better Choice be made than out of a CHARITY-SCHOOL? where a neat, and tractable, and virtuous and religious little Scholar, is like young *Joseph*, a Blessing to the Family he comes into, and like *him*,
in

in Time of Need, may help to relieve a City, and to save a Kingdom.

IF our Splendid *Hospital for Seamen* be within a little Time adorn'd with an Appartment for *Boys*, to be bred early to Navigation, and those Parts of the Mathematics that are most useful to guide a Ship, and to survey the World: from whence shall a Supply of those Boys be taken, but from our CHARITY-SCHOOLS? where Lads may be pick'd out Sprightly, Hardy, Ingenious, and Good, fitter for the Service of their Queen and Country; fit to enlarge that Dominion of the Seas, which hath been long our Right, and is now our eminent Glory.

To return. This good Influence of Knowledge and Instruction on the Happiness of a Kingdom, has made many of our Kings and Queens to be Nursing Fathers and Nursing Mothers to the Children of their People. Our pious King *Alfred*, to banish Paganism and Barbarity from this Island, erected Reading Schools in several Parts of his Dominions, and, as we are told by a good Historian; He obliged all his Subjects of Ability to send their Children to those Schools: Nay, and by what we have of his own Royal Writings, we find that He came to this Resolution, that all Children should be sent to School, to learn to read *English*, and to write it, before they should be put to any Calling. And our Queens have been as Eminent in this Royal Wisdom and Goodness. Our Abbot *Ingulph* tells of himself, that while a Boy, and coming from School to Court, Queen *Edgith* would do him the Honour to hear him and examine

*Joh. Bromtoni
X. script.*

*Prefat. Al-
fredi in Col:
Camden. p. 28.*

*Hist. Ingulph.
Edit. Gale. p.
62.*

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him, and by her Maidens gave him Pieces of Money to encourage his Progress in Books and Learning. To come lower down. In the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, by Her Royal Example and Countenance, there were more Schools and Colleges founded, than in any three or four Reigns whatever. There seems to be a Reason in the Nature of Things, that when the more tender Sex ascends the Throne, all the Objects of Pity and Compassion are better considered and provided for. So will it be in this Auspicious Reign: Several of the CHARITY-SCHOOLS have tasted of Her Majesty's Royal Bounty, and One of them has been already Incorporated by Her Royal Favour. Under the Influences of Her Wisdom and Goodness, We are a happy People! Glorious Success abroad and good Education at home shall (we trust in GOD) more and more flourish and abound.

LET me be now drawing towards a Conclusion, with this Inference from the whole: "That we ought all
 " of us, in our several Stations, to promote and carry
 " on this good Work of the Education of Children:
 " Especially of the poorer Sort; that we may join
 " Hand in Hand, to become Planters and Builders in
 " this Noble Scheme of National Glory, this best Appearance of Humanity on Earth; Our Sons growing up as the young Plants, and our Daughters being as the polished Corners of a Palace, or a Temple.

THERE is no Collection now propos'd for this pious Use: We are only to go back and take all Opportunities of recommending the excellent Design by our Words and Actions, by our Advice and Persuasion, and above all, by our Example. The Arguments for

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for POOR CHILDREN. 67

it are too many to bear a mentioning at this Time. You hear them frequently urg'd in the Sermons and Lectures that are preach'd on Behalf of these poor Children: And you see them abounding in the Word of GOD; especially in the 16th of St. Matthew, where our dear Saviour, who chose to be himself an Infant, and would be represented as *increasing in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with GOD and Man*; He, blessed JESUS! *called a little Child unto him, and set him in the midst of his Disciples; and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little Child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven: And whoso shall receive one such little Child in my Name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a Millstone were hanged about his Neck, and that he were drowned in the Depth of the Sea. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: For I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven. No Subject can be more moving, and no Words can be more pathetical upon it.*

MY Brethren, how has GOD been with us from our Youth up until now? And ever since we *hanged on our Mother's Breasts*, how have his Rod and his Staff been our Comfort and Support? What a mighty Argument of the good Providence of GOD is given in the Preservation of young Children! That poor Infants, who can neither help themselves, nor tell their Wants to others, should be supplied with all that is necessary for them: That *they* should run safely through

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so many Disorders and Diseases, that are incident to their infirm and tender Age: That *they* should be delivered from so many Accidents which hover continually round them; and should escape a thousand thousand Hazards, to which their own Weakness, and the Carelessness of others, does expose them Night and Day. I say, that poor Children should rub through such a Multitude of Mischances, and should hold up their helpless Heads in the midst of so many and great Dangers! Why, that an Infant should escape to be a grown Person, it is a Miracle of GOD's Mercy; and it could not be, unless GOD covered them under the *Shadow* of his *Wings*, and hid *them as the Apple of his Eye*. Especially if we consider, that the Children of the Poor, who have least Care and Cost afforded to them; they generally thrive best, grow fastest, and live longest: while the Children of the Rich and the Noble, who have a nicer Tendance, and a more expensive Trouble bestow'd upon them, *they* commonly are more weakly and sickly, and come soonest to untimely Death; that in this Case it may appear, how *GOD is all in all*.

WE may forget this Argument; but the ancient Fathers were so sensible of it, that they did believe and did assert, That GOD Almighty, the Father of the Fatherless, did set a Guardian Angel over every Child, to watch over and defend the little helpless, harmless Creature; and they grounded their Opinion on that Text of Scripture, which I lately cited, *St. Matthew xviii. 10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven.* And indeed, I think the Text does sufficiently imply, that these poor little ones are under the special Care

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and Protection of GOD, and of his *Ministring Spirits*,
the *Holy Angels*.

THIS Divine Guardianship has lately appeared after a wonderful Manner, in the Education of poor Children, as well as in the common Protection of them. Many Persons here present have seen a late Book, entitled, *Pietas Hallensis: or a Publick Demonstration of the Footsteps of a Divine Being yet in the World, in an Historical Narration of the Orphan House, and other charitable Institutions at Glaucha near Hall in Saxony* *. The Book was written by an eminent Professor of Divinity, the Pastor of that Town, and Director of the pious Foundations there; And it seems to be written with a great Air of Integrity, cloathed in Modesty and Humility unaffected. What a surprizing Account is there given of that CHARITY-SCHOOL, or Orphan-House, or Hospital for Children! How mean was the Beginning of it, from a little Alms-Box fixed at the Minister's Study-Door? What inconsiderable Mites were at first dropt into it? How did the sorry Fund for some time hardly afford a few Books for the poor Children? But how, by degrees, did GOD open the Hearts and Hands of Neighbours and Strangers? Till insensibly there was enough to provide first a Room for the CHARITY-SCHOOL, then Materials for a House, then to lay the Foundations, and again, to enlarge 'em beyond the first Project, and at last, by seasonable and unexpected Supplies, to make up so fair and large a School and Hospital, and sort of University, as no Age hath before seen. Nay, and after all, to maintain it and improve it with no settled Endowment; but by con-

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* Sold by J. Downing in Bartholomew-Close.

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tingent Presents and occasional Contributions only. I confess nothing in the World seems more Providential, or rather more miraculous.

COULD we trace the obscurer Footsteps of our own CHARITY-SCHOOLS, the Finger of GOD would be as evident in them: That a private Person or two should project such a publick Design, at first thought impracticable: That it should be tried in one single Parish, as a Specimen of good Meaning only: That it should stand out the Dislike of some few, and the Despair of many others: That the difficult Example should spread it self to other Parishes, and be gaining Ground by little and little, till it took Possession of these Cities, and is hence propagated thro' all the Kingdom. That in the setting up of these Schools, some who unaccountably oppos'd them were on the sudden reconcil'd to them: That some were made instrumental in them almost without their own Knowledge: That there was a Wheel within a Wheel, and the prime Agents were most concealed, to avoid Envy and Ostentation. I say, to think of the many Difficulties, and the overcoming of them with little Strength; *this* serves to assure us, that it is GOD'S Work, and that it does and shall prosper in his Hands.

FOR this Charity has not been confin'd to our own Nation only; the good Example of *England* hath diffused it self through many other Protestant States and Kingdoms: By our Model the like CHARITY-SCHOOLS are setting up in *Holland, Switzerland, Prussia, Saxony*, and even in *Moscovy*; as if our good Works and our Arms were to spread their Glory together thro' all *Europe*.

TEN Years are hardly gone and past, since this Design of CHARITY-SCHOOLS was first laid; and behold the least of Seeds is already become a great Tree, and Multitudes of young Children do lodge under the Branches of it. Let me read, as has been the Custom of Spittal Sermons,

A True Report of the CHARITY-SCHOOLS, and of the great Number of Poor Children therein Taught, and most of them Cloathed, and many of them put out in the World.

I. WITHIN the Cities of London and Westminster, and within Ten Miles thereof, there be Sixty Four CHARITY-SCHOOLS, in which there be constantly maintained above Fifteen Hundred Boys, and near One Thousand Girls. For the Support of this Charity, there have been voluntary Subscriptions amounting to near *Three Thousand Pounds per Annum*; and the Collections made for this Purpose at Sermons and Lectures preach'd for the Children, have been above *Thirteen Hundred Pounds per Annum*: And the stated Gifts and Legacies made to these respective Schools, from the Beginning of them, have risen to above *Five Thousand Three Hundred Pounds*. By which Means, out of the Number of Children so taught, and generally cloath'd, there have been at least *Six Hundred and Eighty Boys*, and *Two Hundred Girls*, put out Apprentices upon the common Fund; besides many of both Sexes that have been taken as Servants into sober, honest Families, and several Boys admitted into Her Majesty's Service at Sea.

II. IN other remoter Parts of this Kingdom, according to the Example borrowed from this City, there be about *One Hundred and Forty Charity-Schools* of the like Nature, wherein about *Three Thousand Poor Children* have

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been freely taught, and a good part of them cloath'd, some wholly maintain'd, and several of them disposed well in the World. Most of this is done by the charitable Contribution of the Inhabitants. In one Town, the Subscriptions amount to above *Two Hundred Pounds per Annum*. Some small Country Schools of Charity are maintain'd at the sole Expence of private Persons. Other Schools have been built and encourag'd by Corporations and the Magistrates of them. In some Places, the Ministers teach the Children of the Poor to read *gratis*. Several Ministers pay for all the Children whom their poor Parents will send to School. Other Ministers have applied the Offertories, or Collections at Communion to this charitable Purpose. And in some few Parishes, the more able Rectors of them have founded and perpetually endowed such CHARITY-SCHOOLS. And by Lay-People many considerable Gifts and Legacies have been bestow'd and bequeath'd to this pious Use: *Twenty Pounds per Annum* by one Gentlewoman; *Sixty Pounds per Annum* by another; and no less than *Six Thousand Pounds* to one Place by one particular Gentleman. In all these Schools the Children are taught Civility and good Manners, and Reading, and Catechizing: In some of them the Boys learn Writing and Arithmetick, and Navigation; and the Girls are taught to Knit, and Sew, and Mark, and Spin, and Card, and mend and make their own Cloaths.

III. In *Wales*, the Governour and Company of the *Mine-Adventurers of England* allow, within two several Counties, *Twenty Pounds per Annum* in each for CHARITY-SCHOOLS, to instruct the Children of the Miners and Workmen belonging to the said Company; and *Thirty Pounds* Yearly to a Minister to read Prayers, Preach, and Catechize those Children. In another County, the Lord of the Manour and Freeholders are Building a CHARITY-SCHOOL on the Wast, and enclosing Part thereof, which is to be given for ever for Teaching the Poor Children of that Lordship. And within other Counties some Numbers of Poor Children are taught at the Expence of Private Persons.

IV. IN *Ireland*, there is publish'd an Account of some CHARITY-SCHOOLS set up in the City of *Dublin*, in Imitation, as the Account expresseth it, of the CHARITY-SCHOOLS in *London*.

WHAT a comfortable Account is this! at the Foot of it may be written, *The Pleasure of good Christians, and the Glory of this Age and Nation!* Shall the Papists now boast of their Piety of *Rome*, and Piety of *Paris*, because of some Hospitals and Houses call'd Religious? When this one City does far exceed them in a fundamental Charity, to which *Rome* and all its depending Countries are Strangers and very Enemies. They cannot erect CHARITY-SCHOOLS upon *their* Principle, that Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion. They must not acquaint the poor Children with the Scriptures, nor with any publick Form of Prayer in their Mother Tongue. This is a Charity which they call *Heresie*; but so we *worship the GOD of our Fathers*, and so we teach our Children.

A Method of Instruction that will be sure to arm another Generation against the Dangers of Popery. For how will these little ones, when grown up to Men and Women; How will they ever blind their own Eyes, and bow down their Necks to that dark Slavery? How will they part with their Bibles, when, like *Timothy*, from a Child they have been acquainted with the Scriptures? How will they stoop to Beads and *Latin* Charms, who have learned so many plain *Forms* of sound Words in their Catechisms, Psalms, and Prayer-Books? No! Every CHARITY-SCHOOL is as it were a Fortrefs and a Frontier Garrison against Popery.

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WE remember the Time, when in a Popish Reign, one Artifice of the Jesuits was, to open a Charity-Grammar-School in the *Savoy*; to inveigle and corrupt our poorer Youth. The best Expedient then

*St. Martin's
Westminster.*

thought of to countermine that Subtilty, was to open the like CHARITY-SCHOOLS in the Neighbourhood, for a better Education in Learning and the Protestant Religion. All our present CHARITY-SCHOOLS, tho' not opened directly on the same View, yet will serve directly to the same Purpose: to be a Bulwark against Popery, and a Grace and Defence of our Reformation.

THIS good Work must be acknowledged to be an Immortal Honour to the last and present Reigns, which GOD of his good Wisdom connected together, as perhaps the only two happy Reigns for many Ages permitted to succeed one another. Many of our former Reigns have been distinguish'd for some peculiar Acts of doing Good. The Reign of *Henry VII.* for Uniting the Two Families, and likewise for Balancing the Nobility and Commonalty. The Reign of *Henry VIII.* for casting off the Yoke of Papal Usurpation, and laying the Foundations of our Reformed Church; That of *Edward VI.* for carrying on the excellent Work: That of Queen *Elizabeth*, for completing of it: That of King *James I.* for bringing *Great Britain* under one Monarch, and keeping up a continual Peace — The Reign of King *Charles II.* was not only adorned with a wonderful Restoration of Church and State, and Peace and Plenty; but was likewise bless'd with an Encrease of Hospitals and Schools, and, I think, with the first Institution of Charity

city Feasts — The last Reign was dignified with a signal Deliverance of these Nations from Popery and Slavery: And the present Reign seems to be reserv'd for higher and more distinguishing Favours of Heaven: For the reducing of *France*, for the restoring of *Spain*, for the preserving all *Europe*, for the Union of our two Kingdoms, and possibly, by degrees, for the greatest Blessing of all, the making us all of *one Heart and one Mind*. But now among other Glories of these two Reigns, this Foundation and Encrease of CHARITY-SCHOOLS and Work-Houses, seems to me to shine forth, and to warm our Affections in a very extraordinary Manner.

It is apt indeed to be obscur'd by that Variety of other good Works, which yet really adds Lustre to it: I mean, that Constellation of noble Designs; The forming Societies for Religion, and for Reformation of Manners, and for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and for erecting of Parochial Libraries, and what has been the Queen's sole Prerogative of Charity, the Augmentation of the Livings of the poorer Clergy. These noble Acts, done at a Time when Taxes have been heavy, when Trade has been interrupted, when Murmurs and Factions have been very discouraging; *These noble Acts* breaking thro' all Opposition, will fill our Annals with the fair and sweet Memorial of them; and what is more our Concern, will with our Prayers help to draw down a Blessing on the present Age, and on Posterity: The prime Blessing of Her Majesty's Health, and long Life, to give Protection to all her Allies, to gain Victory over all her Enemies, to restore

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restore the long broken Balance of *Europe*, and to settle Peace and Prosperity to this Church and Nation, that it may be well with *us*, and with our Children after us: Which GOD of his infinite Mercy grant to us and ours, thro' the Mediation of JESUS CHRIST, &c.



A



A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

J U N E 5. 1707.

Being T H U R S D A Y in W H I T S O N - W E E K,

By F R A N C I S G A S T R E L, D.D. Canon of *Christ-Church*.

P S A L C X L V I I. 12, 13.

*Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem: praise thy
God, O Sion. For he hath strengthened the
Bars of thy Gates: He hath blessed thy
Children within thee.*



THESE Words of the Psalmist are supposed
by Interpreters to refer to the Time of
Nebemiah; when the Children of *Israel*
were returned from their long Captivity in-
to their own Land: When the *Temple of*
the Lord was rebuilt, and the Walls of *Jerusalem* re-
pair'd;

pair'd; And when *the People, the Priests and the Levites, and all they that had separated themselves from the Filthiness of the Heathen unto the Law of GOD, they, their Wives, their Sons and their Daughters, had enter'd into a Curse, and an Oath, and made a Covenant, to observe and do all the Commandments of the Lord their GOD, and his Judgments, and his Statutes.*

GREAT and Wonderful were the Blessings which gave Occasion to the Author of this Psalm to call upon all his Brethren to join with him in praising and magnifying the Lord: But that which seems most to have rais'd his Devotion, was the Reformation of Religion, which was begun among them, the solemn Engagement by which they had oblig'd themselves to serve the Lord; not only *the Men and the Women, but their Sons and their Daughters, and all that could hear the Law, which was read to them, with Understanding.*

THIS it was that gave Strength and Security both to *Jerusalem and Sion*, both to the Nation and Church of the *Jews*. And all their outward Peace and Prosperity, their present and their future Happiness, did in a great Measure depend on God's thus *Blessing their Children within them*; when they were all instructed in the Law of GOD; and had not only bound themselves to observe it, but had taken the most effectual Care they could, to engage their Posterity also to tread in their Steps, that the *Generation to come should know the Commandments of GOD, and keep them, even the Children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their Children.*

AND thus, in like Manner, we of this Kingdom, who have lately received many great and signal Mercies from the Hands of GOD, are more especially oblig'd to
praise

praise him for inspiring us with such Zeal and Concern for his Service, as now appears in the Methods that are taken to educate Poor Children; and for the wonderful Success which he hath given to this glorious Work.

O U R *Jerusalem* is Rebuilt, and the Building is more Stately and Magnificent than before; and though the Sound of War is heard from far, yet doth she not smart under the worst Effects of it at home: *Peace is within her Walls, and Prosperity within her Palaces*: But that which *strengthens the Bars of her Gates*; that whereby she is *exalted*, and made a *defenced City*, is this *Blessing of GOD upon her Children within her*.

O U R Churches also are Rebuilt, and the *Great Temple* is almost finish'd; and no proper Ornaments are wanting to *beautifie the House of the Lord*: But that which makes the *Glory of these latter Churches greater than the Glory of the former* is, that they are filled, at these charitable Solemnities, with those that *worship GOD in the Beauty of Holiness*.

G O D hath bless'd us with frequent Victories over our Enemies abroad; we are made stronger at Home by the Union of Two Nations long divided in their Interests; and we have a near Prospect of enjoying all the Temporal Prosperity that Peace can give us. But unless we *return unto the Lord our GOD, and make a sure Covenant with him, to observe and do all his Commandments, his Statutes, and his Judgments*, we may be never the better for all these glorious things which G O D hath done for us. Victory and Success may serve only to nourish our Pride; Peace and Plenty may administer Occasions to Sloth and Luxury; when we are safe from Foreign Enemies, we may be disposed to discharge

charge our Fury upon one another ; and when Trouble and Affliction are removed far from us, we may give way more easily to all manner of Vice and Filthiness : This, I say, may probably be our Case, except Religion come in to sanctifie all these outward Blessings to us; and to direct us to a proper Use of them.

It is *Righteousness* alone that can support and *exalt a Nation*. The only sure Way of rendring a People truly happy, is to make them truly Religious. And the most likely Method that can be taken to raise a new Spirit of Piety where it was decaying, is by an early and careful Instruction of our Children in the Fear of GOD, and in the Ways of Virtue and Holiness.

GREAT Reason therefore have we to praise GOD; that He hath put it into the Hearts of some of his faithful Servants, to set on Foot such a charitable Design as this before us, of Educating the Children of the Poor : The very Beginning of which gives us a just Title to the Favour of GOD, and which, in the Progress of it, is like to produce more happy Consequences both to *our Jerusalem* and *our Sion*, than all the Temporal Blessings we enjoy, or expect.

Now, in order to raise in you a due Thankfulness to Almighty GOD ; to do Justice to those who have had the chief Hand in forming and promoting this good Design ; and to stir up other Persons to contribute their Endeavours for the Carrying on, and advancing the Work, which hath been so prosperously begun ; it will be very proper, at this Time, to take as full a View as we can of the *Charity*, by considering,

First, The Nature. And,

Secondly, The Influence and Extent of it.

i. As to the *Nature* of this Charity: It is purely Religious; the whole Aim of it being to give those Persons, to *whom* it is extended, a just Account of the *Being and Providence of GOD*, and of *the End and Duty of Man*; and to strengthen and confirm them in the Belief, and Love, and Practice of what they are taught. And the Methods that are here taken, are the most proper and effectual for that Purpose.

That the Soul should be without Knowledge, we are sure, *is not good*. And what Knowledge can be so useful to us as that of Virtue and Happiness? What better *Beginning* can there be of *Wisdom*, than *the Fear of the Lord*? And when can this Wisdom find a more easie Entrance into the Soul, than *in the Days of our Youth*?

THIS is certainly the best Season for all manner of Learning and Instruction, and the most proper Seed-time of Religion. Whatever grows up first in our Minds will, with due Care and Culture, be likely to take the deepest Root, and produce the largest Encrease. But Religion must have the Advantage of being planted first, or else the Soil may be indisposed to receive it; *The Ground* may prove *stony* or *full of Thorns*, and *the Seed* that then *falls upon it* may *wither away*, or *be choaked* without bringing forth Fruit.

THERE are in all of us some natural Inclinations to Good as well as to Evil; and if these are improved, and confirmed into Habits before the other *have Dominion over us*, they will become the commanding Principles of our Minds, and keep under the *Power of Sin* in our mortal Bodies.

IN the present State of our Corruption, *the Flesh and the Spirit* are always *warring one against the other*: But the Contest between them is never so unequally

managed as in the Years of Infancy and Youth, when the Impressions of Sense are strongest, and the Powers of the Mind least able to resist them. This is then the most proper Time to enlighten and fortifie the Understanding, and to curb and restrain all our sensual Appetites and Desires : which being well broken and tamed at the first, will afterwards submit themselves, without much Struggle, to the Guidance of Reason.

THIS is the most helpless State of our *Souls* as well as of our *Bodies*. And now therefore it is, that we have most need of the Care and Assistance of *others* to *shew us the way of Life* ; to *nourish us up in the Words of sound Doctrine* and Wisdom ; to bend and fashion our Minds to Virtue ; and to keep them streight and steady, till we come to the full Stature of our Understandings, and are able to guide and conduct *our selves*.

How many Persons, well disposed by Nature, have been engaged in vicious Courses before they had learn'd to distinguish between *Good* and *Evil*, between *Inclination* and *Reason* ? How many poor ignorant Souls have went along with the *Multitude* in the *broad Way to Destruction*, only because they were destitute of a Guide, by whose charitable Direction they might easily have been put into the *narrow* but less troden *Way that leads to Life eternal* ?

How many other Instances do we meet with, of such as lament the Misfortune of a vicious Education, when it is too late to retrieve it ? such as are sensible of their *Bondage* to Sin and *Satan*, when they have neither Strength nor Resolution enough to set themselves free ?

AND how wretched is the Condition of those, who being resolved to break through all the Difficulties into which

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which a misguided and ill-spent Youth hath plung'd them, are forced to imploy the latter Part of their Lives in unlearning and undoing whatever they have learnt and done in the former? who are at more Pains to correct one vicious Habit, than was requisite at first to confirm them in all manner of Virtue? and who have no other Way left of being *saved*, but *by Fire*; by all the Hardship and Pain that the continual Remorse of their Consciences and the Importunity of their Appetites can give them?

WHAT a happy State then must they be in, who, when they come to take upon them the Government of themselves, have the Pleasure to find their Understandings replenished with proper Knowledge, their Passions tractable, and obedient to Reason, and the whole State of their Souls regular and orderly? What an Ease and Comfort must it be to them to perceive, that all things have been so well managed and conducted for them, during their Minority, that they have nothing more to do but to go on in the Path which lies plain before them, without either turning to the right Hand or to the left.

THIS is the most natural and most likely Effect of a Religious Education: And this is the chief Aim and Design of this charitable Institution, to infuse the true Principles of Religion and Virtue into the Minds of those Children, who, for Want of such a particular Care, would, in all Probability, have been bred up in gross Ignorance, and abandoned to all the vicious Consequences of it.

BUT Knowledge alone, tho' never so well and carefully instilled, is not sufficient to preserve us in our Youth, from all the Temptations that then beset us;

for whatever Diligence be used in *sowing the good Seed*, the *Enemy*, who is always at hand, will be equally busy in scattering the *Tares* among it: as well knowing of what Importance it is to him to have his Share in the *first Fruits of the Increase*.

THE best Way then to render our *Knowledge fruitful in good Works* is, to guard and fence it in from those three main Springs of Corruption and Vice, *Want, Idleness, and Ill Examples*. And that is particularly provided for in the Way of Education we are now considering.

WERE poor Children never so well instructed in the *saving Truths of the Gospel*, yet the Meanness of their Condition will necessitate them to be *careful about* so many other things, that they will have but little Leisure and less Inclination to mind the *one thing needful*; tho' they understand their Duty to GOD and their Neighbour, yet when they have not *Food convenient for them*; when their Appetites are craving, and the Demands of Nature peremptory, they will be tempted to *steal, and take the Name of GOD in vain*: When *Poverty comes upon them like an armed Man*, it must be no ordinary Degree of Virtue that can enable them to *hold fast their Integrity*, and not part with their Innocence for a *Morsel of Bread*.

HERE therefore, not only the Ignorant are instructed, but the Poor are also relieved: And not only relieved for the present, so that they are at Liberty to attend to the *Words of Instruction without Carefulness and Distraction*; but put also into a Condition of supporting themselves afterwards; by being taught and exercised in all sorts of honest Labour. By which Means they

are

are preserved from the greatest Danger incident to humane Nature, that of *Idleness*.

WHAT was inflicted upon Man for the Punishment of his first Transgression; [*that in the Sweat of his Face he should eat Bread*] is now become the most likely Means of preserving us from all other Sin. For our Souls are as active and inquisitive as ever, and must be always imployed one Way or other; and therefore, if we do not constantly find some proper Business for them, *the Thoughts and Imaginations of our Hearts will be only Evil continually.*

I went by the Field of the Slothful (saith the Wise-man) and lo it was all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered the Face thereof, and the Stone-Wall thereof was broken down. And just such shall we find the Condition of his Soul, over-run with Vice and Error, and lying open and exposed on all Sides to Temptation. But Industry fixes the Mind, and keeps it clear and free from all loose Thoughts and wandring Desires; and guards us every Way against the Attacks of our spiritual Enemy.

It is by *Labour*, that we are furnished with all the Necessaries and Advantages of this Life: And I doubt not but, if we consider the Matter right, it will be found, that our being ingaged in some Business and Imployment, conduces as much to our *Eternal*, as to our *Temporal* Welfare. For this I take to be the true Reason why it is so *hard for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of GOD*; because, being exempted from all the Toil and Care of Life, he is apt to enter too far into the Pleasures of it, and to *say to his Soul, Soul, take thine Ease, and enjoy the good Things before thee*; whereas our Portion here is Labour and Exercise, not Injoyment.

THE Business of our Salvation is a great Work ; which cannot be effected without Diligence, and Zeal, and earnest Contention ; but He who is unacquainted with Labour, He that hath not been accustomed to any other *Travel under the Sun*, will scarce take the Pains that is required towards *working out his Salvation*, and *making his Calling and Election sure*.

NEXT to Idleness, nothing hath so pernicious an Influence upon us as *Ill-Examples*. Sin, as well as Knowledge, is most of it owing to *Tradition* ; for as no Body would know much of himself, were there not others before him more learned to instruct him ; so neither would any Man, that had only the Bent of his own Nature to guide him, find out much Evil, had he not the Examples of some that were more wicked than himself to pervert his Goings, and to lead him into the Paths of Sin : But so curious are we to know, and so quick to apprehend, and so ready to follow that which is Evil, that a few Instructors in Wickedness are sufficient to corrupt all those who are not well established in contrary Notions and Methods of Practice.

GREAT therefore is the Benefit of such an Education as this ; where Children are not only bred up for several Years under the Eye and Direction of discreet Persons, who are always *shewing them what is good*, and are never seen to depart from their own Lessons ; but where, by learning the same Rules, and practising the same Duties all together, their Minds are more easily bent the same Way ; and they are by a mutual Emulation, excited not only to imitate, but to excel one another. And when every one of them hath so much innocent Company to converse with in their Schools, the loose Examples they meet with, out of them,

them, will not be so apt either to please or infect them.

SUCH is the Nature and Constitution of this Charity : Let us now consider the *Influence* and *Extent* of it.

WHEN we survey the Numbers of Children thus Educated ; when we see the Charity continually growing and spreading it self, not only by a constant Succession of fresh Supplies to the Fountains already opened, but by the Rise of new Springs ; what a noble Prospect does this afford of the Increase of Virtue and Religion among us, to have so many Persons *daily added to the Church of GOD*, by being put into the right Way of Salvation ? What a Pleasure would it be to those Holy Persons, who are now very *jealous for the Lord GOD of Hosts*, at a Time when it seems to them, that *all Men are gone astray, and have forsaken the Covenant of GOD*, and that *they only are left* to support his true Worship : What a Pleasure, I say, would it be to such as these to behold at once, more than *seven thousand that have not bowed their Knees unto Baal* ; that have not polluted themselves with the wicked Principles and vicious Customs of the present Age ?

BUT this is the narrowest View we can take of the Design. For these Schools are not like the *Popish Monasteries*, and other Places of religious Retirement ; those standing Pools of Charity, which, if they do not stink and grow corrupt, yet, being pent up within narrow Bounds, carry no Refreshment or Fruitfulness to other Parts. These are pure and wholsom Streams, which are always running, and dispersing themselves into different Channels, and by that Means communicating their Virtues to all the dry and barren Parts of the Land.

THE Children that are here educated, will afterwards be distributed into many Families; they will be entred into several publick Societies; and by Reason of their various Employments, and the different Success that may attend their Labours, they will come, in Time, to mix in most of the Business and Conversation of the World; and consequently, they will have many Opportunities of giving publick Proofs of their virtuous Behaviour, honest and upright Dealing, and religious Disposition towards GOD: By which Means, as it may reasonably be hoped, many of those, who *see their good Works*, will not only *glorifie their Heavenly Father*, but will be stirred up to imitate their good Example, by endeavouring to bring forth Fruit of the same kind.

MANY likewise will be apt to enquire, whence these Persons had all their Knowledge and Virtue; and when they have traced them to their true Source, they will, in all Likelihood, be disposed to encourage such a Way of Education, as hath produced so many faithful Servants, honest Traders, useful Subjects of the State, and sincere Members of GOD's Church.

NOR will the Influence of this Charity stop here. These poor Children will, many of them, hereafter be placed at the Head of distinct Families: And then the just Sense they have of the Advantages of their own Education, will engage them to breed up their Children and Servants, and all such to whom their Advice and Direction extends, in the same pious and useful Manner. They will endeavour to fix in them betimes those Principles of Religion, which, from sure Experience, they know will best fit them for every Condition of Life here, and give them the most comfortable Expectations of a better State. They will likewise, according

to the Skill they have attained, by contriving Ways to employ even those who do not belong to them in some proper Business; as being well assured that, next to Religion, nothing can be more beneficial to the Bodies and Souls of Men, to private Families, and publick Communities, than a general and early Application of Persons to Labour. And if GOD shall be pleased to bless any of them with Riches, (as Piety and Industry always give the best Title to a Competency, and often prove the best Means of attaining Abundance) what Advantages may the World justly expect to reap from those, who are thoroughly convinced, that they cannot better express their Gratitude to GOD and their Benefactors; or do a greater Service to Religion and their Country, than by contributing bountifully to this Charity?

THUS doth *their Light shine before Men*; and as none of it is *hid under a Bushel*, while they live; so neither is it all extinguished when they die: But their Piety and good Works shall survive them, not only in the Memory of Men, but in a righteous *Posterity*, who shall *approve their Sayings*, and follow their Examples, and deliver them both down to their Childrens Children.

BUT to take the Dimensions of this Charity another Way: As the Number of Children which partake of it is very great, so is likewise those of the *Contributors* who supply and feed it. And how can it be supposed that those who so far approve the Design, as to give largely towards the Instruction of other Peoples Children, should be less solicitous for the Education of their own?

THEY

THEY will be often enquiring how their well-meant Bounty hath been employed, and what Fruits it hath produced? They will be pleased to see Plants of their own setting and watering, thrive and flourish: This will affect their Minds continually with a deep Sense of the great Advantages which attend a Religious Education; and will excite them to take Care that their own Children are not worse instructed, and worse disposed, than the Children of the Poor.

AND who can be more proper and effectual Advocates for this Charity; who are more like to use their utmost Endeavours to raise up new Benefactors, than those, who, by contributing themselves, have had the best Opportunities of observing how wisely the whole Design is conducted, and what mighty Success hath already attended it?

NEITHER is it improper here to mention the Number of those who are, not only creditably maintained, but usefully employed in the several Parts of *Instruction* necessary for these Children; a constant Succession of Persons well inclined and well qualified to educate Youth, being a Blessing of invaluable Consequence both to Church and State.

THUS does it appear how far the Influence of this Charity is like to reach, if we take a View only of those who are immediately concerned in it. Let us in the next Place consider, in what Manner those who look on may probably be affected with it.

NOW the publick Processions of these Children, with all the other Methods made Use of by those who are chiefly intrusted with the Care of propagating Christian Knowledge this Way, must needs excite the Curiosity
of

of all sorts of Persons ; and there are very few, I believe, so lost to all Sense of Goodness, as not to be pleased with such an unaffected Appearance of Religion as This: Several may be induced from hence to entertain more serious Thoughts of GOD and Religion than they had before ; and whoever is *Ready to distribute, or willing to communicate*, will hardly be able to pass by so proper an Occasion of doing Good.

It was the Saying of a Learned Heathen, That ‘ If Virtue could be rendred visible, it would attract the Eyes and charm the Minds of all Beholders.’ The nearest Images we now have of it, are some Examples of Persons eminent for virtuous and worthy Actions ; but these being few and rare, and the best of them tarnished with a Mixture of Vice and Passion, cannot strike the Mind so forcibly, as such an united Combination of Children, all in their native Innocence and Simplicity, advancing on together in the Ways of Piety and Virtue, and like a regular well disciplined Army, performing all the Duties of the spiritual Warfare, with exact Order and Obedience. And a more sensible, more beautiful Representation of our most Holy Religion, there cannot well be, excepting only the *Armies which are in Heaven, that follow the Lamb upon white Horses, clothed in fine Linen, white and clean.*

BUT the Charity I am now recommending, doth not consist in Shew and Appearance only ; for the more nearly we look into it, and the stricter Account we take of the whole Process of this Affair, the more we shall be convinced, that of all the Ways of exercising that most excellent Gift of Charity, this is certainly the truest and most unexceptionable, both as to the End aimed at, and the Methods taken to compass it.

FOR

FOR wherein can we employ our selves more to the Advantage of our poor Brethren, than by Instructing them in such *Things as belong to their Peace and Salvation*; by providing Food and Raiment convenient for them; and by fitting them for honest Callings and Employments, where they may *work with their Hands the Thing which is good*, that so they may be able to support themselves and their Families, and *may have to give to him that needeth*? And when can we shew this Kindness to them more properly, than at a Time, when they are least able to take this Care of themselves; when they are best disposed to receive Benefit from the Assistance of others; and when all our Endeavours of this kind are like to be attended with the greatest Success? To which I may add, that nothing can contribute more to render every Branch and Part of this Charity effectual, than the carrying them all on together at the same Time with equal Care and Application.

AND that the whole Work is thus duly and carefully managed, we have sufficient Reason to be satisfied from hence: That whatever is given towards it is freely bestowed by *every one whose Heart stirred him up*, and *every one whom his Spirit made willing*: That there are no other Managers but what are likewise Contributors; and that the Benefactors are always living to take Care of their own Charity, and to see it justly and usefully laid out.

WHAT may we not then expect from a Charity of this Nature, which in so short a Time, and in an Age which seemed so indisposed to good Works, hath gained so much Ground? And who will undertake to set Bounds to the Progress of Religion from these blessed Beginnings?

T H E R E

THERE are (as it appears to me) many promising Signs and Tokens of a new Face of Things coming on in the World; and Christianity seems to be reviving again by the same Steps and Methods by which it was first published. For the *Kingdom of CHRIST* does now, as it did then, chiefly consist of *Children*, and out of the Mouths of *Babes and Sucklings* bath *GOD* again ordained Strength. It was then one of the chief Marks of *CHRIST*'s being the true *Messias*, That the Poor had the Gospel preached unto them: And there are those, we see, who even now think it the best Way of approving themselves true *Disciples of CHRIST*, by Instructing the Children of the Poor, and removing as well the Spiritual as the Corporal Wants under which they labour. *CHRIST* came, not only to give Knowledge of Salvation to his own People, but Light also to all them that sit in Darknesh and in the Shadow of Death. And we hope *GOD* will in like Manner bless the Endeavours that are now used to Propagate the Christian Religion in Foreign Parts, as well as here at Home; to enlighten the Heathen, and carry them the glad Tidings of the Gospel, as well as to Instruct and Reform such as are called by the Name of *CHRIST*. And some Hopes we may conceive, that a general Reformation is really going forward, and will, in *GOD*'s good Time, have its due Effect, that the Devil seems to be let loose again, and to be come down among us in great Wrath, as before in our Saviour's Time; tho', *GOD* be thanked, he never had weaker Instruments to carry on his Work: The present Enemies of *CHRIST* and his Gospel being Men of the worst Characters and meanest Talents that ever undertook to support so Defenceless a Cause.

Cause. The subtlest and most powerful Adversary that Christianity ever had, was He who used his utmost Efforts to hinder Children from being Instructed in the Principles of that Religion: But the same God who disappointed that Device in the former Ages of the Gospel, when it was most likely to succeed, having now also been pleased to prosper the contrary Counsels which are taken for advancing the *Kingdom of his Son*; we have good Reason to hope and believe, that the *Church* which shall be built upon these new Foundations, shall be so firmly established, that *the Gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail against it.*

AND now having laid before you this true, tho' short Account, of the Nature and Extent of the *Charity*, there will be no Occasion for other Arguments to excite and encourage Persons to join together in promoting a Work so reasonable in it self, so universally approved by Men, and so mightily blessed by God with Success.

THERE are very few, I believe, to be found so intent upon the present Enjoyments of Life, as not to have some Regard for Posterity; and very few there are either so ignorant or so profligate themselves, as not to desire to have their Children well improved, both in Knowledge and Virtue: And therefore, since the only Persons that can be supposed either to dislike or obstruct this Design, are such as have no Concern at all for *Posterity*, and no Regard for *Religion*; It is to be hoped, that the Generality of all sorts of People, even those that are impatient of Instruction and Reformation themselves, will, according to their several Opportunities and Abilities, chearfully and generously contribute,

bute, what in them lies, to make the next Generation wiser, and more virtuous than this.

ALL that I shall add further upon this Subject is, that this seems to be in divers Respects the most favourable Season we can have for carrying on such a Work. For when can it be more likely to thrive, than in the Reign of a QUEEN, who is so bright an Example of Piety and Goodness Her self; so avowed a Promoter of all Designs of this Nature; and who hath so Bountifully, contributed to the Maintenance of the poor *Labourers in GOD's Vineyard*, in order to *encourage them in the Work of the Lord?* And when, after a long War, GOD shall be pleased to give us the Blessings of Peace; How can we offer a more proper *Peace-Offering for a Thanksgiving unto the Lord*, than by *presenting* unto Him our Children a *living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to the Lord?* Which Way can we make a better *Attonement to GOD* for the Sins which the Liberties of War may have brought in, than by using our utmost Endeavours to restore the Reverence and Obedience due to the Holy Laws of *the Prince of Peace, CHRIST JESUS?* And when can we have more Leisure, or more Ability to *build up our selves and our Families to an Holy Temple in the Lord*, than when GOD hath given us *Rest on every Side*, so that *there is neither Adversary nor evil Occurrent?*

MAY GOD be pleased to strengthen the Hands, and encrease the Zeal of such as labour in any of those good Works, which tend to the Advancement of his Glory. And may he evermore defend and protect his Church, so that *the Boar out of the Wood may not waste it, nor the wild Beast of the Field devour it.*

Behold,

Behold, O Lord, and visit this Vine, which thy Right-Hand hath planted; prepare Room for it, and cause it to take deep Root, that it may fill the Land; that the Hills may be covered with the Shadow of it, and the Boughs thereof may be like the goodly Cedars; that she may send out her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Branches unto the River. Let thy Hand more especially support the Branch which thou hast made strong for thy self: And let these tender Plants grow up before Thee. Then shall we declare the Name of the Lord in Sion, and his Praise in Jerusalem.





A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

MAY 27. 1708.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By ROBERT MOSS, D. D. Preacher at Grays-Inn.

PROV. XXII. 2.

*The Rich and Poor meet together ; the Lord
is the Maker of them all.*

THE obvious Meaning of this Proverbial
Speech is, that *the Rich and Poor* are
mingled, or rather associated together as
Members of the same Community ; under
very different Circumstances indeed, as to
their outward Appearance and Condition ; but with a
H manifest

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manifest Equality as to their Nature and Origine: For *the Lord is the Maker of them all.* Ecclesiastic. xxxiii. 10, 11. *All Men are from the Ground, and Adam was created of Earth: in much Knowledge the Lord hath divided them, and made their Ways diverse.* The same GOD is both the Author of their Being, and the Disposer of their Fortunes: As he maketh them *Men*, so he also, 1 *Sam.* ii. 8. *maketh Poor, and maketh Rich, he bringeth low, and lifteth up;* the one is the Effect of his creating Power, the other the Allotment of his governing Providence. For, according to the Psalmist's Calculation, (who was wiser in this Point than any Astrologer) *Psal.* lxxv. 6, 7. *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South;* 'It depends not upon the Position of the Heavens, nor 'the Influence of the Stars, nor any such imaginary 'Cause: *But GOD is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.*

THIS I take to be the true Purport of the Doctrine contain'd in the Text, which is too plain to stand in need of farther Proof or Illustration.

MY Business shall be,

First, To raise some general Observations from hence, conducing to Christian Knowledge and Practice.

Secondly, To point in particular at the respective Duty both of the *Rich and Poor*: First towards GOD as their common Creator; then towards each other as Fellow-Creatures.

Thirdly, To make an Application pertinent to the present Occasion of our *meeting together* in the House of GOD.

The

The Rich and Poor meet together: the Lord is the Maker of them all.

I. And the first thing I would observe from hence is, that, as GOD is the *Maker* of all Men, *Psalms* xlix. 2. *High and Low, Rich and Poor, one with another*, so it is to be suppos'd, that he hath made Provision sufficient for the Happiness of them *All*.

THE very Notion of GOD as a Creator makes this Supposition clear and incontestable. For, as GOD is in Nature infinitely Good, so there is nothing, that we can conceive, could determine him to create this World, and people it with Mankind, but the free Motions of his own communicative Goodness. This is so discernable by the meer Light of Reason, that the * Philosophers, when they are upon the Enquiry what should be the impulsive Cause or Reason of GOD's making the World, without Hesitation, solve the Problem by DIVINE GOODNESS.

* *Queris quid sit propositum Deo? Bonitas. Ita certe Plato ait. Quae Deo faciendi Mundum causa fuit? Bonus est,*

bono nulla cuiusquam boni invidia est. Seneca Ep. 65.

AND if Goodness was the pure Motive that induc'd GOD to communicate Existence to Mankind, to furnish them with the Necessaries and Conveniencies of this Life, and to endow them with noble Faculties, that seem to look beyond this Life, and make them capable of higher Enjoyments; then may we certainly conclude, that the good GOD design'd the general Good and Happiness of these his Creatures in creating and arranging them as he did; and that he provided *sufficiently* for the Good and Happiness of them *All*, because the Design was conducted by infinite Wisdom as well as Goodness.

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AND whatever Diversity may appear in Mens outward Circumstances, how unequal soever the Distribution of GOD's common Gifts may seem, we must still conclude; that there is a competent Provision made for the Happiness of *All*; because GOD cannot be suspected of Partiality to *Any*: — *He regardeth not the Rich more than the Poor; for they are All the work of his Hands,* Job xxxiv. 19. And it can never be imagin'd, that he should make any of them on Purpose to be Miserable, or for any other End indeed than to be Happy. Far be it from us, O Lord, to entertain any such harsh or impious Thought of thee! *For thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made: for never wouldest thou have made any thing, if thou hadst hated it;* as we have it very appositely express'd in the Book of Wisdom, *Chap. xi. 24.*

AND this is the first Observation I thought proper to make from the Text, to lay the better Foundation for that Reverence, Submissiveness, and Thankfulness, which is universally due to our Beneficent Creator.

II. IT is to be observ'd farther, that, tho' GOD must be suppos'd to have provided sufficiently for the Happiness of *all* Men, as he is the Maker of them *All*, yet are there wise and good Reasons notwithstanding for the promiscuous Dispensation of Good and Evil in this World: Nor is it to be expected that All should be happy, or Any compleatly happy here.

IT is apparent in Fact, if *we look into all the Works of the most High*, Ecclesiastic. xxxiii. 15. that *there are two and two, one against another*: the Rich against the Poor, and Prosperity against Adversity.

AND we must acknowledge Things to be well and wisely thus order'd, both upon a Natural and a Moral Account.

UPON

UPON a Natural Account first, because there could be no Government without Subordination. And if, by the Disposition of Providence, all Men had been made as equal in Fortune and Condition, as they are in Nature, it would have been an eternal Dispute, who should obey, and who should govern: And it had been hardly possible to bring things, upon such a *Basis*, to any tolerable Order, or perfect Settlement. Whereas that Disparity of Circumstances betwixt Man and Man, which GOD in Wisdom hath appointed, serves to induce such as are mean and needy willingly to resign the Power to them who already enjoy the Advantages of Birth and Fortune: And it is no less an Inducement to the Wealthy and Honourable to cherish and protect the Poor, without the Assistance of whose Hands, the most plentiful Condition would be so far from being happy or easie, that perhaps it would be the most anxious, and the most laborious. And GOD's provident Care is very remarkable in making the Rich and Poor thus mutually needful and helpful to each other; that so they might be link'd together by the strongest Ties of Interest, and Both sufficiently encourag'd to act agreeably to the Station in which GOD hath placed them.

AND this appears to be a very wise and good Administration likewise upon a Moral Account; because that Variety of Conditions which is allotted to Men in the changeable Scene of this transitory World, affords room for the Trial and Improvement of various Virtues, which suit, some with one State of Life, and some with another. For Example, Poverty is the proper State to try Mens Faith, Patience, and Resignation: And Plenty, to exercise their Humility, Charity, and Moderation: And the Changes and Chances by which they are fre-

quently toss'd from one Condition to the other, help to prove their Constancy and Firmness, to enlarge their Experience, and to convince them of the Emptiness and Vanity of all Sublunary Things.

FOR, in Truth, when all is done, tho' we cannot suppose GOD's Creation to be so defective, as that any thing should be wanting to make Men happy; yet neither can we be so fond as to imagine that Man's true Happiness should consist in the Affluence or Abundance of any thing that this Earth can furnish.

WERE it so, we should not see one Man rolling in Ease and Plenty, whilst another sweats hard to live, or groans under pinching Necessity. No! we may depend upon it, all these things would be distributed with an even Hand, and in the exactest Proportion, if they were indeed Essential to our Happiness: Or rather, the virtuous and godly Man would be sure always to enjoy the most and the choicest of all Temporal Blessings; the Justice of a GOD, that is the *Father of Mercies*, 2 Cor. i. 3. would in no wise suffer him to pass undistinguish'd.

BUT since 'tis notorious that Things are quite otherwise dispos'd; that *all things* indeed *come alike to all*, Ecclesiast. ix. 2. and that *there is one Event to the righteous and to the wicked*; and that so it must be without a constant Interposition of Miracles; we must of Necessity be convinc'd, that the Happiness which is properly *Human* is not here to be expected: Because no Man can be certain of possessing and enjoying that fancy'd Happiness which this World affords, nor can the best of Men promise himself to be compleatly happy in a World, where the Good and Evil are so chequer'd each with other, that every Move a Man makes may produce a considerable Change in his Condition.

AND

AND this was an Observation useful to be made from the Text, partly to vindicate the Wisdom of Divine Providence, and partly to teach us the true Value of these earthly Things, and to put us upon seeking for something more solid and durable. For,

III. It must be observ'd yet farther, that since GOD hath undoubtedly made a sufficient Provision for the Happiness of *all* Men, and yet it does not appear that there is any such suitable Provision made for them in this World, it must unavoidably follow, that there will be a future State of just Recompence and compleat Happiness.

FOR if this Life were to set the Bounds to all our Expectations, and to put an End to our very Being, it would be a sore Evil indeed, and the most remediless of all things that are done under the Sun, that the Good and Bad should be so unequally involv'd in one Event; or that the one (as it often happens) should suffer undeservedly even for being Good, and the other flourish and triumph in his very Wickedness. This were a Management upon no Terms to be reconcil'd with the Justice, Wisdom, or Goodness of that GOD, who is the Maker and Governour of the World. But since we cannot entertain the least Doubt, but that These are Perfections Essential to the Godhead, and always in Harmony with each other, we must as infallibly conclude that there is to be a State of exact and adequate Retribution hereafter.

AND though this be a Conclusion that hath all the Certainty and Clearness that Reason well could give it, yet lest Men, *because of the Blindness of their Heart*, should be in Danger of losing the comfortable Sight of it, GOD hath expressly declar'd, *Heb. x. 34, 35.* that

we have a better and an enduring Substance, a great Recompence of Reward, an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us, 1 Pet. i. 4.

AND, this once mention'd, all the Difficulties are perfectly clear'd up concerning the promiscuous Distribution of Good and Evil in this World. For since here we have no continuing City, but seek for one to come, which hath Foundations, and whose Builder and Maker is GOD, Heb. xiii. 14. and xi. 10. it matters not much what our present Condition is: For there are Mansions for the Poor as well as for the Rich in Heaven, and the Way thither is equally open to them Both; and during their Passage through this mortal Life, they are Both upon their Probation, though in a Method somewhat different. And if they take care so to behave themselves, as becomes that Dependence which they have upon GOD, and that Relation which they bear one to another, according as GOD hath rang'd and order'd them, they may meet together in Heaven at last, and be jointly possess'd of the Riches of that glorious Place, and the *Inheritance of the Saints in Light*.

AND this was an Observation needful to be taken along with us, in order to give a right Determination to our Thoughts and Affections, and, by presenting us with a true Prospect both of our present and our future State, to teach and enable us so to pass through things Temporal, as that finally we lose not the things Eternal.

II. I proceed now to point more particularly at the respective Duty both of the *Poor* and *Rich*: First towards GOD as their common Creator; and then towards each Other as Fellow-Creatures.

I. AND

I. AND first towards GOD as the Creator and Governour of all Things, it is the respective Duty of the Poor, quietly and patiently to acquiesce in the Sovereign Disposals of his good Providence.

AND this is a Duty plainly dictated by Natural Reason. For *Epictetus* an Heathen can tell us, "That we are but Actors of a certain Part which the Master and Director of the *Drama* hath assign'd us; and that it belongs to us to act that Part well and handsomly that falls to our Lot, even though it be that of a Beggar, since the Choice is not in our Selves, but in Another.

Enchirid.
Cap. 23.

BUT the Scripture carries the Point higher, and resolves that Sovereign Dominion which GOD exerciseth over us, into the Original Right of Creation, which ought not once to be disputed or murmur'd against by any Creature. For, *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker*: (saith the Prophet *Isai. xlv. 9.*) *Let the Potter strive with the Potsherd of the Earth*: *Shall the Clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?* And if the Potter hath such Power over the Clay, much more must the Power of GOD be allowed to be most absolute, and his Judgment most certain and unerring, both in framing his Creatures, and carving out their Fortunes for them.

AND therefore the poorest and the meanest Mortal that is, is bound, with all humble Submission, to rest contented with that State or Condition in which it hath pleas'd GOD to rank him; always remembering, that he is in the Hands of a faithful Creator, who, though he hath made him, in the Eye of the World, but low and little, yet can and will notwithstanding (if

(if it be not his own Fault) make him truly happy and glorious.

2. ANOTHER special Duty incumbent upon the *Poor*, with Respect to their Lord and Maker, is a regular and religious Behaviour in that Station which GOD hath allotted to them. For Poverty is far from being any Hindrance to Virtue: It rather helps to awaken Consideration, to cure Mens Fondness for the World, and create a sort of Indifference towards it; and this naturally makes way for serious Thoughts, and raises the Affections towards better and higher Things.

AND certainly it lies upon all such as are in these Circumstances, thankfully to comply with the gracious Designs of Providence: and, since they are not cumbered with the Cares of Life (except only for meer Necessaries) nor much acquainted with its deceitful Pleasures, it behoves them to chuse that *good Part which shall not be taken away from them*, Luke x. 42. and to attend diligently upon the *one thing needful*, the important Business of Religion, and the Welfare of their Immortal Souls; And, as knowing that *the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him*, Rom. x. 12. they should endeavour to treasure up Favour with him, and *lay up in store for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come*; that so, how scanty soever these perishing things at present be, or how soon soever they may fail, *They may at length lay hold on eternal Life*.

3. ANOTHER special Duty that the *Poor* owe to their Lord and Maker, is a firm Trust and Affiance in him. For the Straitness of their present Condition is no Argument that they are deserted or neglected of GOD; since he is nevertheless able to provide, and indeed hath effectually provided for that which is their true
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and only Happiness. Nay, he hath declar'd himself to be their Patron and Protector even in this World ; and therefore of all things they ought not to cast away their Confidence in GOD, because they are destitute of other Helps : But they ought so much the rather to cast their whole Care upon him, and *in every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving to make their Requests known unto him* ; Philip. iv. 6. not doubting but that He providently careth for them, and will either actually relieve their Wants and Miseries, or else make these appearing Evils to work together for their real Good, and minister to the Increase of their Joy and Glory in the World to come.

AND now, on the other Hand, I must take leave to give the *Rich* a few Hints of that Duty which they also owe to their Sovereign Lord and Maker.

I. ONE great Branch of which consists in an humble Acknowledgment, that he is the sole *Arbiter* and Disposer of their Fortunes ; that their Riches are the Gifts of his Providence ; and that they have nothing but what they have receiv'd. This is what they ought to make themselves thoroughly sensible of, the better to testify their Thankfulness to GOD, the Fountain of all Good, and to avoid those Snares to which their Condition lies most expos'd. That they may not be so vain as to *Sacrifice to their own Net*, Hab. i. 16. and attribute their Prosperity to their own Industry, Contrivance, or Management : That they may not be apt to turn wanton, and forgetful of GOD, which is a Disease that the Surfeit of Plenty too often breeds : That they may not grow fondly enamour'd of the Gift, to the Dishonour of the Giver ; and Idolize the fine Gold, by setting their Heart upon it, and putting their Trust in it.

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All which are dangerous Temptations, with which *the GOD of this World* will be endeavouring to *blind their Minds*, unless they keep up a constant Sense of this very thing in their Thoughts, that it is *the living GOD that giveth them all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. v. 16. that it is his *Blessing* that *maketh truly Rich*; and that without it, Riches alone can yield no Enjoyment, no Contentment.

2. ANOTHER Instance of Duty that the *Rich* owe to Him who made them what they are, is to be Exemplary in their Obedience to his most holy Laws. For all the Wealth in the *Indies* can never purchase any Indulgence for Sin at GOD's Hand. And therefore the *Rich* must not presume to think, that they are Men privileg'd, and set free from the Fetters of Religion; that they are not tied up by the Rules of Temperance and Chastity; that they are not obliged by the Law of Christian Meekness and Forgiveness; that they are not bound to attend GOD's solemn Worship, and to *revere* his *Sabbath* and his *Sanctuary*. For to allow themselves in such Thoughts, or to govern their Practice by such corrupt Maxims as these, would be a most insufferable Affront to the Majesty of their great Creator, as well as abominable Ingratitude to their bountiful Benefactor. Whereas they indeed, of all Men, are under the greatest Obligation to be Virtuous and Religious, because they stand indebted for the largest Receipts unto GOD. And this Obligation is so much the stricter upon them, because the Figure that they make, and the Sway that they bear in the World, adds a sort of Authority to their Example; and they should study to be very exact in their Behaviour, and very exemplary in all Virtue, lest, by living licentiously themselves, they
should

should set Fashions in Vice, as they do in other things, and draw the Multitude after them, who are always prone to imitate, especially that which is Evil.

3. ANOTHER peculiar Head of Duty that is owing from the *Rich* to their liberal Creator, is what *Solomon* very significantly calls *honouring the Lord with their Substance*, Prov. iii. 9. by dedicating some part of it to Pious and Charitable Uses; that is in Truth, by giving unto Him of his Own, as the Rivers flow into the Sea from whence they sprung.

AND without all Question, they who have tasted so largely of GOD's unenvied Bounty, should hold themselves more particularly oblig'd to pay their Tithes and Oblations punctually; (in which GOD hath an immediate Propriety, as being the settled Maintenance of his Ministers) and to contribute upon Occasion, what may be farther needful towards the more honourable Support of the Ministry, and the more decent Performance of divine Worship: They should hold themselves oblig'd to be ready, to their Power, to help forward any good and useful Work, and to *devise liberal Things*, especially for the Advancement of true Religion and Virtue, and the Encouragement of Industry and Honesty among the Poorer sort, whom GOD hath in a manner substituted to be his Receivers.

AND therefore, since the Goodness of Man extendeth not unto GOD, since 'tis impossible to be in a proper Sense beneficial to our Maker, They, whom he hath bless'd with Abundance, should esteem it their Privilege as well as Duty to lay hold on the Opportunity of making him their Debtor, by cheerfully lending unto him in the Person of the Poor, and bestowing some Portion of his Gifts as he himself hath appointed. But this

Part

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Part of their Duty will present it self again under another View, whilst I am considering the reciprocal Duty of *Rich* and *Poor*, one towards another, as Fellow-Creatures : Which I shall now do in very brief Hints, as not unregardful of your Patience.

1. AND first for the *Poor*, one main Part of their relative Duty towards the *Rich*, is a modest Deference and humble Deportment, as towards those whom the Almighty Providence hath placed in a superiour Station. For since it is GOD's own Appointment, that some should be Rich and some Poor, some High and some Low, that so, by a due Subordination, Government might be the better maintain'd, and the Ends of Society answer'd, no doubt This infers an Obligation upon those of inferiour Degree, to keep their Rank, and observe *Decorum* in it ; and not to look up with an evil and an envious Eye upon those who are plac'd above them ; much less to behave themselves Rudely and Disrespectfully towards them, or to turn Refractory and Contumacious, because such disorderly Behaviour would be an Act of Disobedience against GOD, and a Resistance of his Ordinance.

2. ANOTHER necessary Piece of Duty that the *Poor* are bound to pay to the *Rich*, is Honesty and Diligence in their Vocation and Business. For since it hath not seem'd good to their Maker to bestow much Plenty upon them, they ought to be content with his Allowance, and to accept it upon the Terms that he has given it them, even the Sweat of their own Brows. They must not dare to set up for their own Carvers, by filching and stealing, or any base or dishonest way of Livelihood ; they must not give themselves up to Idleness, nor take to the wretched and wicked Trade
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of Begging; which is indeed to rob their wealthier Neighbours and the Publick of the useful Help of those Hands, which were made for Labour, and ought to be so employ'd.

BUT now again the *Rich* must not disdain to be put in Mind, that they owe some sort of Duty even to the *Poor*.

(1.) AS first, Humanity, I reckon, and Tenderneſs is a Due, that they ought never to deny to the *Poor*. For they may, nay they muſt, (without Fear of leſſening themſelves by the Condeſcenſion) always conſider them as Brethren of the ſame common Nature with themſelves. And Human Nature, even in the meaneſt Guiſe, can never deſerve ſure to be thought contemptible by Any of its own Kind. It muſt be a very unnatural ſort of Pride to think it ſo, or to treat it as ſuch; to think and act, as if the meer Outſide and Trappings of a Man were what diſtinguiſh'd the *Species*, or rather created a new one; exalting the *Rich* into *little Gods*, and thruſting down the *Poor* into the Rank of vileſt *Beaſts* or *Creeping Things*.

A piece of Contempt This, which, beſides its being ſo highly injurious to our Fellow-Creatures, flies at laſt in the Face of GOD himſelf. *For He that deſpiſeth the Poor, reproacheth his Maker*, Prov. xvii. 5. reproacheth the GOD that made him *Poor*, and could have made this proud Deſpiſer *Poor* too: nay, who can at any time bring the Stateliſt Mortal that is, low and even with the Duſt he treads on; and on the other Hand often *raiſeth the Poor out of the Duſt, and liſteth up the Beggar from the Dunghill to ſet them among Princes*, 1 Sam. ii. 8. — And This, not only to exerciſe his own Prerogative, but alſo to teach both *Rich* and *Poor*,

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Poor, that they are equally dependant upon Him ; and that therefore no one ought to over-value himself on the Score of his Wealth, or despise and insult Others that want, since the Difference in their Condition is purely precarious, and at the Will of their Sovereign Lord and Maker.

(2.) ANOTHER Duty that the *Rich* are bound to perform towards the *Poor*, is Justice ; the Justice, I mean, of paying them the deserved Hire of their Labour, and rewarding their honest Industry. And this sort of Justice is so much the more strictly a Due, because Injustice in this Case would be downright Cruelty and Barbarity. For what is it less to defraud or oppress those poor Souls, whom Providence it self hath sufficiently straitned ; not suffering them to get even an hard Living by the Sweat of their Brows, but most unmercifully forcing them both to sweat and to starve ?

AND this kind of Practice, barbarous as it is in it self, so it implies a very heinous Reflection upon GOD'S Honour : For *He* also *that oppresseth the Poor, reproacheth his Maker*, Prov. xiv. 31. as who should seem to think that GOD hath left the *Poor* both unprovided for and unprotected ; and that he made them for no other End, but to be very Slaves and Beasts of Burden to the *Rich*. But this is certainly a crying Provocation that will be heard and answer'd with a Vengeance one Day : For *Behold* (saith St. James, Ch. v. 4.) *the Hire of the Labourers, which have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth : and the Cries of them which have reaped, have entred into the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.*

(3.) THE last Duty owing from the *Rich* to the *Poor*, that I shall now insist on, is (what I made men-

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tion of before) Charity. For though the *Poor* have no legal Demand upon the *Rich*, for that which is purely their free Benevolence, yet they have a Right that is Superiour and Antecedent to all Human Constitutions: For they claim under GOD, who is the Supream Lord and Proprietor of the Universe, and hath purposely so shared his own Distributions, that the Abundance of some might be a Supplement to the Want of others.

AND, in strictness of speaking, the Man, that in the Vogue of the World passes for a Master of many Thousands, is not the proper Owner of what he hath; He is only GOD'S Steward: and the larger Estate he hath to manage, so much the greater is his Trust and Care in the Family; and he ought accordingly to give to every one their *Portion* in due *Season*, and in full *Measure*: Which if he neglects to do, he is guilty of foul Ingratitude as well as Disobedience to his Lord; and manifest Wrong to his Fellow-Creatures, over whom he is made a kind of *Ruler*. In Discharge of which honourable Trust, he ought to be both faithful and wise; faithful in bestowing his Alms according to his Abundance, giving a *Portion* to seven and also to eight, (nay to 50, to 100, to more if he can) *as not knowing what evil shall be upon the Earth*, Ecclesiast. xi. 2: and wise in so contriving and managing his Charity, as may make it truly useful and beneficial, and, as far as is possible, (like our Saviour's Miracles, which were also Works of greatest Mercy) Salutary at once both to Soul and Body: "He should take Care, not only to fortify and cloath
" the Bodies of his needy Brethren with convenient
" Food and Raiment, but he should contribute what he
" can to relieve their Spiritual Wants; to supply them
" with the Bread of Life that is from Heaven; to
" cloath

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“ *cloath them* (as the Prophet *Isaiab* expressees it) *with*
 “ *the Garments of Salvation* ; to lend Eyes to their blind
 “ Understandings, and Feet to their lame Wills ; to
 “ fashion their Manners aright at first, or to bring them
 “ again to their true Bent whilst they are yet flexible ;
 “ to keep them *from turning aside into crooked Paths*,
 “ and to *lead them in the Way everlasting*.

III. AND, whilst I am mentioning these things, I doubt not but you already perceive where my *Application* will properly fall in. You cannot indeed but have the Satisfaction to perceive, that the Provision of late Years made among your selves, for the Education of such *Poor Children* as are destitute of their Parents Care or Help in this Particular, is that same faithful and discreet, that useful and excellent sort of Charity, which I have been describing, but need not recommend to you.

AND yet it may be fit to take some short Survey of this your Charity, that, by the *shining Light* it gives, Others may be enabled to discern the Comeliness and Beauty of such *good Works*, and incited to *glorifie* GOD, not only by more abundant Thanksgivings to him, but by additional Supplies to perfect so laudable and extensive a Design. And that the Design may appear to be in a good forward Way of advancing, you can already take upon you to say, that, in and about these Cities of *London* and *Wesminster*, there are more than 3000 Children, of both Sexes, under the Christian Care and Tuition of the several Undertakers, Managers, and Promoters of this well-plac'd Charity : And all these Children are provided for and supplied, in some competent Degree, such as is best suited to their Needs both of Soul and Body ; the chief Regard being still had to their better and their nobler Part.

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SOME of them are not only taught and clad, but entirely maintain'd; partly by Subscriptions and Collections, and Gifts and Legacies from well-dispos'd Persons, and partly too by the Contribution (as I may so call it) of their own proper Hands: For, where there is Convenience, or Stock sufficient for it, they are train'd up to Work; which is no unprofitable Piece of Learning, considering that an early Habit of Idleness is the common Bane of Those, who cannot honestly hope to support Life otherwise than by their Labour.

MANY amongst them, such as are best capable, are taught to Write legibly, and cast Accounts tolerably; and thereby the better fitted for any future Employment or Vocation, to which also They are timely apply'd, where the Fund is large enough to afford it.

ALL, or most of them, in the mean while, are modestly and plainly, but neatly apparell'd, or at least they wear some becoming Badge of their Benefactor's Bounty; which serves too to distinguish them from the unnurtur'd Crew, that Lurk about the Streets, either to Beg, or to Steal.

BUT whereinfoever they fall short, they are All sure to be very carefully instructed in the Fundamentals of the Christian Religion, according to that Form of sound Words compriz'd in the Church-Catechism; by some familiar Exposition of which they are made acquainted with the chief Heads both of Faith and Practice: and at the same time they have the Precepts of Virtue frequently inculcated upon them, and the opposite Vices (such especially as are most incident to Youth) noted with some Mark of Disgrace, and forbidden under a severe Penalty; that so, by this wholesome Instruction and Discipline, they may learn in the whole Course of their Lives to chuse and cleave to that which is Good, and to abhor that which is Evil.

116 *The Providential Division of Men*

THE Improvement One would chiefly wish, in an Undertaking so well-concerted, and so far advanc'd, is, that, as it shall please God to enlarge Men's Hearts, your Funds may grow proportionably, 'till they may suffice to keep *all* the Children employ'd at Work, whilst they remain with you; and afterwards to place them out to Apprenticeship in some honest Trade or Occupation: that so, as They have been inur'd to Industry from the Beginning, they may be put into a Capacity of getting a future Subsistence, and of making the right Use, and reaping the whole Benefit of the good Education that hath been bestow'd upon them.

AND I am firmly persuaded, that, thro' God's Blessing, you will never want fresh and perpetual *Springs* to feed and swell these enlivening *Streams*, that do already *make glad* so many of our Towns and Cities, and promise such Abundance of good Fruit of various Kinds.

FOR it is a Charity This, of the largest, the noblest, and most beneficial Influence. It is highly beneficial in the first Place to the poor Children themselves, who by this Means are opportunely preserv'd from the Contagion of ill Example, and that Corruption of Manners which too generally prevails; and are favourably prepossess'd (whilst their Minds are yet undebauch'd) with a Sense of Religion, and some Relish of Virtue and Goodness.

IT is (or may be) no less beneficial to their Parents, who, if they have but the Heart to make use of it, have the happy Opportunity put into their Hands, of becoming Scholars and Converts even to their own Children.

IT is beneficial to all those Persons, to whom these Children may happen to bear any Relation afterwards, either in the Service of a Family, or at the Head of it, because they will have been accusom'd to good Order

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from their Youth up, and thoroughly instructed to make a Conscience of doing their Duty, in that State of Life to which it shall please GOD to call them.

IT is beneficial to the Publick, by disposing those to be useful and helpful Members in the Common-wealth, who most probably otherwise would have been at best unserviceable, if not hurtful and pernicious.

IT is beneficial to the Church, by removing some Part of the Filth and Scandal that would otherwise lye at her Door, in Defiance of her much weaken'd and despised Discipline, to the foul Disgrace of our Christian Profession, and the great Decay of Piety and all Morality.

IT is likely, in the last Place, to prove beneficial even to our late Posterity. For tho' Reformation be a Work that must go heavily on, where the Churches Censures are the Libertine's Scorn, and the Magistrates Ax is not a sufficient Terror to the harden'd Sinner, yet the Bringing up of Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, who would otherwise have been cast out as the Off-scouring and Refuse of the World, may probably put some Stop to the Propagation and Encrease of Wickedness, and cause the Generation that is next growing up to grow some little better: And This may reasonably induce those that follow after, to pursue the same hopeful Method; which by degrees may mend the Face of Things, and make Virtue once more to revive and flourish even amongst This degenerate People.

BUT why do I spend Words to set forth the Usefulness and Excellency of a Charity, that may much more easily be conceiv'd, than it can be worthily express'd? Especially, since you have a sensible Demonstration of it before your Eyes, that persuades at once more forcibly and more winningly, than any kind of artificial Arguments,

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ments, or any Words I could invent : I mean the very Objects of your Charity, These young and tender Plants, who, by your good Cultivation and timely Watering, are growing up *in Grace and the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST*, and are in a fair Way to bring forth Fruit unto Holiness.

I appeal to your selves and your own Sentiments of the thing, (nay, I might appeal to the most careless Auditor here present, or the most unconcern'd Spectator of this Day's humble Procession) Is it not a goodly Sight, to see these *Poor* Children restor'd as it were to Human Shape by your Care ? And is not the decent Appearance they now make, together with You, in the House of GOD, a seasonable *Memento*, that GOD is the Maker of them as well as you ? and that they are made with the same Curiosity of Workmanship, and equally capable (and therefore equally worthy) of the same Improvements in Christian Knowledge and Vertue with your selves ?

AND is it not a melodious Sound in your Ears, to hear them, on Occasion, as a Proof of their Proficiency, rendring an Account of their Christian Faith ; and praying with you and for you ; and praising GOD in Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Riches of his Grace, of the outward Means of which they also are made Partakers through your Liberality ?

AND is it not a Reflection that yields you much inward Complacency, that GOD hath inclin'd your Hearts, to be in the stead of Foster-fathers to these exposed *Innocents* ; to take them up when they were in Danger of perishing ; to rescue them out of the Hands of Ignorance, Rudeness and Vice ; to be their Instructors in CHRIST ; to dedicate them betimes to his Service, and teach them to serve him both with Understanding and Affection ?

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AND is it not a very encouraging Motive to the Exercise of this sort of Charity, that whosoever is thus instrumental in *converting Sinners from the Error of their Ways*, James v. 20. or *keeping neglected Youth from the Paths of the Destroyer*, Psal. xvii. 4. shall *save many Souls from Death*, and *hide Multitudes of Sins*; Sins that would otherwise be deriv'd down from Father to Son in too certain and constant a Succession?

AND as the Prospect of advancing GOD's Glory, and procuring so much Good to Mankind, is, I question not, a very powerful Incitement with You, to abound still more and more in this Labour of Love; so, I should hope too, it may be sufficient, to provoke all those that have any Spark of godly Zeal, any Christian Sympathy, any kind of generous Passions in their Breasts, to put their helping Hand to this blessed Work, and strive together with you for the Honour of the Gospel, and for the Recovery of those *little Ones*, who are *scatter'd* (alas!) almost every where, *like Sheep without a Shepherd*, altho' it is not the Will of our heavenly Father, that One of them should perish, Matth. ix. 36. and xviii. 14.

AND O that the Number of the Fellow-helpers in this necessary Work might daily increase! O that it might be a growing Emulation among Christians, thus to approve themselves the zealous and passionate Lovers of Souls! Were there never so many engag'd in this noble Strife, there would be Room for them All to excel; nay, and Room for All to receive the Prize too, and to become Joint-sharers in the *same Hope and Joy and Crown of Rejoicing*, 1 Thess. ii. 9. And, when the Rich and Poor shall meet together at last, before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST, and a particular Inquisition

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shall be made after Works of Mercy, then (may we piously presume) shall these very *little Ones* appear, and chearfully testifie on Behalf of their Benefactors :
“ We were an hungred, and They have fed us ; We were
“ naked, and They have cloathed us ; We were igno-
“ rant, and They have instructed us ; We were base
“ and vile, and They have refined us ; We were in a
“ manner forsaken and lost, and They have gather’d us
“ up, and restor’d us even into thine Hands, O Lord,
“ that art the Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls !
And then shall the merciful Judge, inasmuch as they have done thus to the *least of these his Brethren*, most graciously accept, impute, and reward it as done to himself. Then shall he richly recompence his own Gifts, in the meanest Services of those that have cared for the Souls of the *Poor* ; and thenceforward shall such *wise Teachers*, as have turned many to Righteousness, shine forth as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever, Dan. xii. 3. And the More they are, the brighter will they shine, and reflect the greater Lustre on each other, *to the Praise of the Glory of GOD’s Grace, wherein they are accepted in the Beloved*, Ephes. i. 6. Amen.

Now to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen.





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of

St. *SEPULCHRE*,

JUNE 16. 1709.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *SAMUEL BRADFORD*, D. D.

ACTS IV. 32.

The Multitude of them that believed, were of one Heart, and of one Soul: neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed, was his own, but they had all things common.



BOTH the Season and the Occasion of the present Assembly led me to the Choice of this Subject. 'Tis that Season in which we commemorate the Effusion of the divine Spirit upon the Apostles of our Lord, and the first Converts

verts to Christianity, with the mighty Influence thereof on the Tempers and the Manners of Christians at that Time. And the special Occasion of our meeting here seems to me to present us with as fair a Resemblance of the Temper and the Manners of those Christians, as ever has been seen from that Time to this.

IF Unanimity and Concord, both in divine Worship, and in carrying on Designs for the Glory of GOD and the Good of our Fellow-Creatures; if Enlargedness of Heart towards Men, particularly towards our Christian Brethren, with respect to their various Necessities; if these were the Characters of Christians in the Days of the Apostles; see here the very same Characters clearly legible to all Spectators: an Assembly of Christians, who have been lately celebrating the Memory of the Descent of the Holy Ghost from Heaven, here met together, as influenced by the same divine Spirit, with one Accord worshipping the GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, some cheerfully imparting, others thankfully partaking both of spiritual and temporal good Things, for the Benefit of the whole Body.

BUT to return to the Words themselves, the Occasion whereof was this. The Apostles St. Peter and St. John having been conven'd before the *Sanhedrim*, Ver. 7. to give an Account of a Miracle visibly wrought upon an impotent Man, were threaten'd, and solemnly charged to preach to the People no more in the Name of JESUS, and so were dismiss'd. When they came to their own Company, they reported what had pass'd; upon which the whole Assembly made their Appeal to Almighty GOD by a solemn Prayer, whereupon *the Place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*, Ver. 31.

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(just as before on the Day of Pentecost;) and the Effect of this was, first, that *they spake the Word of GOD with Boldness*, and then, according to the Words of my Text, *Ver. 32. that the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul: neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.*

THE Method which I propose in treating on this Subject is this;

I. To observe the two great Characters of the whole Body of Christians at that time, *viz.* those of Unanimity and Charity.

II. To enquire in what Manner and Degree Christians in every Age ought to resemble them in these Characters.

III. To propose the Instance now before us as yielding a fair Specimen of the same Temper which appear'd to be in the Christians of those Days, and a goodly Resemblance of their Practice.

IV. To conclude with such Exhortations and Advice, as may be proper with respect to the present Occasion.

I begin with the first, *viz.*

I. To observe the two great Characters of the whole Body of Christians at that Time, *viz.* those of Unanimity and Charity.

As to the former, it is thus express'd, *The Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul*, by which *three* things seem to be implied; a Concord in Judgment; an Agreement in divine Worship; and a joining together in promoting the same
great

great and good Design, namely, the honouring of GOD by propagating the Gospel of his Son.

THE Enemy had not yet sown the Seeds of Contention and Division amongst them. The Spirit of Peace and Concord did so powerfully influence their Souls, that it was in vain for him then to attempt it. They were all perfectly agreed in the great fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith as taught by the Apostles; and they were not so weak as to contend about Matters of smaller Moment. They join'd yet with the rest of their Countreymen in worshipping the true GOD in the Temple, in Hopes that they might by Degrees bring them over to joyn with them in the Christian Worship, which, after the Temple-Service was over, they withdrew, to perform devoutly and unanimously amongst themselves. And the one great Design which they all carried on with much Diligence and Zeal was the spreading abroad the Doctrine of the Gospel, and persuading others to embrace it as they had done.

'TIS true, that Contentions and Divisions too soon arose in the Church. There sprang up false Teachers, who made it their Business to divide the Members of CHRIST'S Body; and forasmuch as it was afterwards made up of two very different Sorts of People, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, they found many plausible Pretences for making Differences amongst them. But, as my Text sets before us the state of Christianity as purely primitive, so during the Lives of the Apostles, and their immediate Disciples and Followers, all that were worthy of the Name of Christians did in a remarkable Manner maintain this Primitive Character of Unanimity.

AND

AND then as to their Charity, as that Word peculiarly denotes a communicative and liberal Disposition, my Text thus expresses it ; *Neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.* And again in the following Verses, *Great Grace was upon them all ;* Ver. 33. or, as some render those Words agreeably to the Syriac Translation, *Great Charity or Liberality was among them all ;* according to what is added immediately after, Ver. 34, 35. *Neither was there any among them that lacked ; for as many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses sold them, and brought the Prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet ; and Distribution was made unto every Man according as he had Need.*

THIS particular Method of exercising their Charity was indeed peculiar to the Church of *Jerusalem*, and at that Season only ; for which very good Reasons have been assigned. 'The *Jews* who embraced Christianity did, according to our Saviour's Prediction, certainly expect the sudden Destruction of their City, and the Desolation of their Countrey, (which accordingly did come to pass before that Generation passed away ;) and therefore they readily parted with their earthly Possessions, in order to the making to themselves Friends, and the laying up for themselves Treasures in Heaven. And this especially, when the pressing Necessities of the Church required it, when a large Contribution was necessary towards the carrying on the great Work in which the Apostles were engaged, and the supplying the Wants of their Christian Brethren in all Places.

AND perhaps this might be moreover design'd to mark out the most perfect Way of living in this World,
wherein

wherein Men should be so utterly void of all Selfishness and Narrowness of Spirit, so unconcern'd for all private and separate Interests, as to be contented to live upon one common Stock, which should be equally employed, as Occasion should be, for the Good of every Member of the Body.

BUT however that may be, thus their Charity is here described, which may suffice to be spoken to the *first* general Head which I propos'd from the Words. I proceed to the *Second*, namely,

II. To enquire in what Manner and Degree Christians in every Age ought to resemble those first Christians in the Characters which I have mention'd.

THERE can be no doubt, but that the nearer we come to the Primitive Pattern, the better Christians we are, what our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles did being design'd as an instructive and obliging Example to the Church in all Ages, wheresoever Circumstances are the same.

As to Unanimity, it is remarkable, that when our Saviour pray'd that his Apostles might live in Unity, he immediately extended this Petition for *those also who should believe in him through their Word*, Joh. xvii. 20, 21. and by Consequence for all those which should in future Times believe in and profess his Name; thus emphatically expressing himself to his heavenly Father, *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me.* And this Prayer hath been heard with Respect to the Spiritual Union of all the genuine and faithful Members of CHRIST'S Body; although, through the Wiles of the Devil,

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Devil, and the Weakness and Perverseness of Men, the external Union and Communion of the Professors of Christianity have been long since and still are miserably broken.

THERE is nothing which the Apostles press more heartily and frequently upon the Christians, to whom they wrote, than their *being like-minded one towards another according to CHRIST JESUS; their glorifying GOD, even the Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, with one Mind and one Mouth*, Rom. xv. 5, 6. that they should all speak the same thing, that there should be no Divisions among them, but that they should be perfectly join'd together in the same Mind and in the same Judgment, 1 Cor. i. 10. and finally, that they should endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace, Eph. iv. 3. And indeed the Nature of the Christian Body, the several Ligaments wherewith the Members of it are bound one to another, require that they should preserve the strictest Union with each other that is possible. So the Apostle reasons; *Ver. 4, 5, 6. There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one GOD and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* It necessarily follows from hence, that all Christians should stedfastly adhere to the great and fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Faith, comprised in that Form of sound Words, which has been from the Beginning the Symbol of Christianity, and that they should bear with one another in their Differences about Matters of less Importance; that they should be ready to join with each other in all the Offices of Christian Worship in every Part of the World, wheresoever their

Lot shall be cast; and that they should all with one Heart and Soul endeavour to promote the Interest of the whole Body, and to advance the Glory of GOD, by propagating the Belief and Practice of Christianity throughout the World. And thus it will be with Christians, when it shall please GOD again to pour out on his Catholick Church the Spirit of Primitive Christianity; when he shall have rooted out of it all Idolatry, Superstition and Tyranny, together with that secular, worldly Spirit that has so greatly prevail'd among Christians; when finally he shall encline the Hearts both of the Governours and the private Members of the Christian Body throughout the World, to reduce the Christian Faith and Worship to its Primitive Simplicity and Integrity, and to lay the Strefs of Religion more upon Practice than upon Profession. This is, in the mean Time, what every sincere and good Christian should aim at, in Imitation of the Pattern in my Text.

As to the other Character, of Charity, I have already observed, that the Manner, in which the Christians of *Jerusalem* exercis'd it, was peculiar to them, and to the particular Time in which they lived, and consequently is not propos'd as an Example to be strictly followed in every Age and Place. It hath pleas'd GOD by his Providence to order, that there should be several Ranks and Conditions of Men in the World; and Christianity doth not alter the Case, unless in such Instances, where the Circumstances of Christians proving like theirs who then dwelt at *Jerusalem*, should require a like Practice. But how far their Charity ought to be an Example to Christians in general, is sufficiently intimated in those other Expressions in
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this Chapter, which I have already cited, viz. Ver. 34, 35. where it is said, that *there was not any among them that lacked*; and again, that *Distribution was made unto every Man according as he had Need*. Thus far Christian Charity ought to be extended in all Places, and at all Times, as far as it is within our Power. 'Tis indeed what humane Nature, as well as our Christian Profession, obliges us to, tho' the Obligations arising from the latter are yet stronger than those from the former.

THE bountiful Creator of all hath not been wanting to any of his Creatures. *The Eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their Meat in due Season. He openeth his Hand, and satisfieth the Desire of every living thing*, Psal. cxlv. 15, 16. He hath made a plentiful Provision for all Men: and if by his Providence his Gifts are variously distributed, to some a larger, to some a smaller Share, 'tis not, that some might live idly or luxuriously, whilst others want the Necessaries of Life; but that all the Members of the great Body of Mankind might be useful one to another, that the Abundance of some might supply the Wants of others; that the Wealthy might exercise their Bounty and Charity, and the Poor their Contentedness, their Faith and Trust in GOD, that both the one and the other might bless GOD for the good Things they all enjoy'd, and that they might all of them glorifie and serve him in the faithful Discharge of the Duties of their respective Stations and Functions: Those who abound in the good Things of this Life are always to consider themselves as the Stewards of Almighty GOD, to dispence his Gifts to the indigent, and to remember that they must give a strict Account of the Management of this

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their Stewardship. They must make their poor Brethren Partakers of their Overplus, and must proportion this their Charity to the Wants of all that are within their Reach, every one contributing his Share to the common Stock for the Relief and Supply of every one that stands in Need. All this is so perfectly agreeable to the Dictates of Reason, and the Precepts of Christianity dispers'd throughout the New Testament, that I need not insist on the Proof of it.

ONLY let me add under this Head, that, as this is the lowest Proportion of Christian Charity, to take Care that *none among us do lack*, and that *Distribution be made to every Man according as he has Need*, so it well becomes a good Christian, from a Sense of the divine Goodness and Mercy thro' JESUS CHRIST, and the Obligations laid upon him by the Gospel of our Saviour, and in Hope of that great Reward which our Saviour hath promis'd, still more and more, in Proportion to the Plenty with which GOD hath blessed him, to enlarge his Liberality, and to become a more generous Benefactor to his Christian Brethren; not only to supply their absolute Necessities, but to increase the Comfort of their Lives, rendring them as easie, as may be in this State of Life; and especially they are obliged to provide for their spiritual Wants, as well as their temporal, and to take Care that sufficient, nay plentiful Means be allowed them for the instructing and improving their Minds, and the directing and regulating their Manners, and the rendring them as wise and as good as is possible. This cannot be doubted by any one who knows, as every Christian doth, that the Soul is infinitely more valuable than the Body, and the Concernments of a future Life infinitely more

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considerable than those of this present Life. But this leads me to the next general Head, *viz.*

III. To propose to you the Instance now before us, as a fair Specimen, a goodly Resemblance of the Temper and Practice which my Text mentions.

BEHOLD therefore! between three and four Thousand Children of both Sexes, and these either Orphans, or descended from Parents, who by reason of the Straitness of their Circumstances were not able to give them such an Education as might be for their present Improvement and their future Comfort; behold them, I say, provided for both with Respect to their temporal and their spiritual Necessities; rescued from Ignorance and Idleness, and as the Consequence thereof, from Vice and Wickedness; most of them cloathed, and all of them instructed in order to their getting a comfortable Subsistence in this World, and securing a well-being in the next; taught to read, and write, and work; inured to Diligence and Industry; educated in the Fear of Almighty GOD; taught the Principles of true Religion, and the Way of worshipping GOD according to the Institution of our Redeemer; exercised in praying to GOD, and singing Praises to his holy Name, and bearing their Part with Decency and Reverence in the publick Assemblies of Christians: and all this done by Persons no way related to them, but as reasonable Creatures and Christians; not by Compulsion of any Law, but by a free and voluntary Contribution; not moved thereunto by Solicitation and Importunity from without, but by an inward Inclination and Desire to do good; nay yet farther, by Persons of differing Perswasions with Respect to some of the Externals of Religion, but all agreeing

in the Fundamentals and Essentials of Christianity, in the weightier Matters of the Law, in loving GOD and our Neighbour, and unanimously promoting the great Interest of our common Christian Profession.

CONSIDER this whole Assembly as met together, I trust, with Unity of Heart and Soul, to render our Devotions to Almighty GOD in the Name of his Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord, to give him Thanks for his Grace bestowed upon us, and to beseech him to bless and prosper the good Work which is before us: Doth not this look very like one of the Assemblies of Christians in the Apostles Days, where nothing appear'd but plain simple Christianity, Piety towards GOD, and Goodwill towards Men, *praising GOD with Gladness and Singleness of Heart, and exercising Charity towards all our Brethren*; where all Selfishness and Narrowness of Spirit seem to be discarded, all Divisions and Distinctions laid aside, all endeavouring to approve themselves Children of GOD, Disciples of his Son JESUS, and Followers of the Apostles and first Christians? May it not be justly said in this Case, as it was in my Text, that *the Multitude of those that believe among us, are of one Heart and of one Soul; and that none of us says, that ought of the things which he possesses is absolutely his own, but that we have all things so far common, as that none among us do lack, but Distribution is made to every one according as he has Need?*

I am sure we have in this Instance, a much fairer Resemblance of the State of the Primitive Church, than that which is given us by that deluded and wretched Sect, who, tho' they have thrown off the very Badges of Christianity, and allegoriz'd away the very Letter of the Gospel, yet pretend to a peculiar Degree of Inspiration,

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ration, and under that Pretence probably have pitch'd upon this very Season for their Anniversary general Assembly.

BUT to proceed: This was in those Primitive Christians the Effect of the divine Spirit descending upon them. And what Reason can there be to question, whether the same Temper and Practice do now proceed from the same Spirit? *The Promise*, viz. of the *Gift of the Holy Ghost*, was, as St. Peter declares, *Acts* ii. 39. *to them and to their Children, and to all that were afar off, even as many as the Lord our GOD should call*; and certainly that Spirit is to be known by its Fruits. Now we are sure that godly Love and Peace, Christian Unanimity and Charity, are eminent Effects and Fruits of the divine Spirit. GOD is the GOD of Peace and Love, and wheresoever his Spirit prevaleth among Men, their Souls are fill'd with these heavenly Qualities. Contention and Division are the Works of the Devil, and carry in them the express Characters of that evil Spirit. But the Spirit of CHRIST, who came to destroy the Works of the Devil, is a calm and benign, a gentle and a loving Spirit, infusing Concord and Charity into all those Minds in which it is admitted to take up its Residence. Blessed be Almighty GOD who hath poured out such a Spirit upon us at this Time.

AND why may we not from hence be led to hope, that these may be the happy Beginnings of the Advancement of the Kingdom of GOD and CHRIST upon Earth? The Progress of Christianity at the first was not more certainly owing to the mighty Works which were wrought by the Apostles, thro' the Power of the Holy Ghost descending upon them, than to the other

admirable Fruits of the same Spirit, particularly that excellent Temper and Practice which it produced in the first Converts.

WE have indeed at this Time a loud and just Complaint of the abounding of Infidelity and Iniquity among us: but there is also, Thanks be to GOD, another and a better Spirit moving vigorously at the same Time, to the great Satisfaction and Pleasure of all good Christians. I might here reckon up several excellent Designs which have been set on Foot of late Years, begun by several pious and serious Persons, forming themselves into Societies for the mutual Assistance of each other, carried on with great Zeal and Diligence, and I believe with much Purity of Intention, and I may add with as few Errors or Faults as could be expected where so many Persons are concern'd. Such for Instance have been the Attempts made for Reformation of Manners; which have not been without a considerable Effect, the removing many Occasions of, and Temptations to Vice and Wickedness, the reclaiming some, and the restraining many more, and particularly the prevailing with Authority to prevent those publick Rendezvous of Impiety and Lewdness, which had been too long permitted, to the Scandal of this and the neighbouring City.

SUCH again have been the Endeavours used for promoting Christian Knowledge and Piety throughout the whole Kingdom, by dispersing plain and useful Books amongst the common People, by providing Parochial Libraries for the poorer Clergy, (a Design encouraged by a late Act of Parliament) and especially by setting up and encouraging CHARITY-SCHOOLS for Educating the Children of the Poor.

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To these are to be added, that truly Christian Design of Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, by sending Ministers and good Books amongst our Plantations, to which Purpose a Corporation has been establish'd by Royal Charter; as also the erecting another Corporation, by the singular Piety and Goodness of Her present Majesty, for the Relief of the poor Clergy, to whom she hath freely parted with what was by Law invested in her, to enable and encourage the Ministers of the Establish'd Church to attend their great Work chearfully and without Distraction.

GOD hath indeed, over and above all that I have already mention'd, given us singular Pledges of his Favour towards us; particularly in making this Kingdom a Place of Refuge for so many Thousand distressed Persons and Families, especially Protestants, who have suffer'd Persecution in their own Countries, or been forced out of them for their Profession, and have fled hither to partake of our Protection and Charity; a *Blessedness*, in our Saviour's Account, more considerable to the *Giver* than to the *Receiver*.

MOREOVER, in recollecting the special Favours of GOD towards us, we ought not to forget those, of his raising up a Deliverer for us, I mean our late King of glorious Memory, in the Day of our Danger; of his preserving us in Peace amongst our selves, whilst we have been engaged in a tedious and dangerous War with foreign Enemies; of his giving us many eminent Deliverances at Home, as well as Successes Abroad, and at present a good Hope and Prospect of seeing our great Enemy, the common Oppressor, humbled, and a lasting Peace settled; (to which 'tis to be hoped, the fervent and joint Prayers of this Congre-

gation may greatly conduce;) and finally of his placing upon the Throne at this Time so eminent an Example of Piety and Virtue, under whose Government, and by whose Encouragement we have ground to hope for a successful Progress of all those good Designs which have been undertaken amongst us: For all which Blessings, as we have great Reason to magnifie the Goodness of GOD, so we should be encouraged thereby to place our Hope and Trust in him, and to proceed chearfully and vigorously in the good Works in which we are engaged; which leads me to what I propos'd in the last Place, *viz.*

IV. To conclude this Discourse with such Exhortation and Advice as may be suitable to the present Occasion.

I. LET me therefore in the *first* Place exhort those, who are not yet engaged in this good Work, to consider the Usefulness of it, and to study to promote it according to their several Abilities.

I mean not, by recommending this one Instance of Charity, to divert you from any other proper Methods of exercising the same Virtue, tho' amongst all others I know not any one more necessary or useful than this.

THE general Rule of our Charity is that which I have insisted upon, to take care that none among us should want any thing that is necessary, or truly expedient for Soul or Body. The Objects before us are such, as would suffer extream Want in both these Respects, without charitable Assistance. A good Education is, next to the Grace of GOD in JESUS CHRIST, the choicest Blessing which Men partake of in this Life.

'Tis

'Tis that which cultivates our natural Endowments, rectifies the corrupt Propensions of Nature, and for the most Part lays the Foundation of all future Virtue and Happiness. The innocent and tender Age of Children demands our especial Care. Our blessed Lord and Master, when his Disciples thought them not worthy of his Concern, express a very tender Regard towards them, representing them as Patterns to all those who desired to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And as the Children of the Poor stand in Need of our Assistance, so they are as capable of a good Education, I mean such as may render them virtuous and useful, as those of the Rich; insomuch that many of that sort have attain'd the highest Improvements, and have been in several Stations, some of the most useful Persons in the Kingdom. And as they are the special Objects of his Care who patronizeth and provideth for the Fatherless and Widow, the distressed and destitute of all sorts; so those who profess themselves to be the Children of this heavenly Father, ought to shew a special Concern for them. We are sure, that their Souls are as precious in the Sight of God, as the Souls of the wealthiest or greatest Persons in the World; they are equally the Purchase of our Redeemer, and equally capable of the Grace and the Happiness which he hath procured for Mankind.

I need not recommend to you the Method in which Children are educated in these Schools; 'tis evidently that which directly tends to the qualifying them for living comfortably and usefully in this World, and happily in the World to come. 'Tis the preparing them first to be good Servants, and many of them, 'tis to be hop'd, in Time as good Masters and

Mistresses; and by Consequence 'tis the doing Good not only to the present Generation, but to those that are future, by laying a Foundation for Piety and Virtue, for Honesty and Industry, in the Ages to come; it being a reasonable Expectation, that many of those who are thus educated, will not only prove useful Members of our Kingdom and our Church themselves, but will moreover think themselves under a peculiar Obligation to propagate Christian Knowledge and Virtue to their Posterity.

THIS therefore must needs be accounted one of those good Works, which are acceptable to GOD, and approv'd of Men, and which will yield great Satisfaction and Pleasure to them that are exercised in it. It will do so at the present, every Act of Beneficence and Charity being extremely grateful to the Mind of a good Man; and it will do so yet more, when they shall see the Work prosper in their Hands, when they shall behold many of those, whom they have thus charitably taken Care of, growing up and thriving like Plants of their own setting, spreading their Branches, and bringing forth Variety of good Fruits.

BUT I will say no more on this Head, not doubting but that the pleasing Sight of this beautiful Assembly will of it self powerfully excite the Hearts of those who behold it. Let me only add, that there is still Room for the enlarging our present Charity, even where a sufficient Number of Schools may be already set up, by proceeding in what has happily been begun, I mean in placing out to Apprenticeships and Services, in honest and sober Families, such Children of both Sexes as have been thus educated. As it will be a considerable Instance of Charity both in those that place out, and

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and in those that receive such Children into their Families ; so I take the Way in which they are educated to be the likeliest Method for making them prove a Blessing to the Families into which they are receiv'd. But,

2. **LET** me add a Word of Exhortation to those also who are already engaged in the good Work before us, and that is, that you would persevere in it with Resolution and Constancy.

YOU have very great Encouragement to this Purpose, when you consider from what small Beginnings so great an Increase and Improvement has been made, and that in so short a Space of Time. This we may reasonably conclude is the Hand of **GOD**, it proceeds from his Blessing upon your pious and charitable Undertaking, and to him the Praise is to be ascribed, who hath not only infused into so many Minds the true antient Spirit of Christianity, the same which inspired the Apostles and first Christians, but hath also given so great Success to your Endeavours. And we ought to make it our fervent Prayer to **GOD**, that he will still pour out more of the same Spirit upon his Church throughout the World, making the Members of it every where fruitful in all good Works.

BUT here, my Brethren, give me leave seriously to advise you, not as jealous lest you should do otherwise, but as sensible of the Weakness of humane Nature, and as considering the Subtilty of our spiritual Adversary, who will not fail to use his utmost Endeavours to blast all such excellent Designs as this ; let me therefore, I say, advise you to carry on this charitable Work always, as you have begun, with great Humility, and with perfect Unanimity.

LET

LET your Humility always manifest it self, in ascribing the Praise and Glory of all the Good you do, and all the Success you have, to GOD alone, who hath vouchsafed to make you his Instruments for the Benefit of your poor Brethren; saying, according to our Blessed Saviour's Admonition, *When we have done all, we are unprofitable Servants; we have done that which was our Duty to do*, Luk. xvii. 10. Let it be farther manifested in all dutiful Regard and Deference to your Superiours both in Church and State, and in a Readiness to comply with all Directions given by them; nay even to hearken to any wholesome Advice, by whomsoever it may be offer'd, for the prudent and successful Management of the Business before you.

LET your Unanimity also be testified by your pursuing your Design *with one Heart and one Soul*, carefully avoiding all Beginnings and all Occasions of Contention amongst your selves, and utterly banishing all Names of Distinction from among you.

WE live in an Age, wherein Divisions abound, and that not only between Persons of different Perswasions in Religion, but even between those of the same Communion. The Design which we are here pursuing has a natural Tendency to unite the serious and pious of different Perswasions amongst us, namely, the teaching the avowed Principles of our common Christianity, together with the Practice of Piety and Virtue in the unquestionable Instances thereof. And I know nothing more likely to unite us, than the zealous Prosecution of such a Design; as at the same Time nothing could so effectually and certainly defeat our Endeavours in this Case, as the espousing or promoting any particular Party or Faction.

LET

LET there be therefore no Manner of Contention found amongst you, unless it be, who shall most zealously and steadily prosecute the Design in which you are engaged, in Methods thoroughly approv'd by all. Beware of any thing that may look like Innovation, of any Thing that may give the least just Offence or Jealousie to any wise or good Christian. Oblige those, to whom you commit the Care of the Children, to adhere strictly to that Method of Instruction in the Principles of Religion which our Church hath prescribed in her plain, short, and excellent Catechism, adding nothing thereto, unless it be some known and approv'd Exposition thereof; that they be made to understand the Nature and Obligation of their baptismal Vow; that they may know the Articles of the Christian Faith, as comprized in the Apostle's Creed; that they may learn their Duty towards GOD, and towards their Neighbour, as taught in the Ten Commandments, explain'd after the Tenour of our Saviour's Gospel; that they may be taught to pray, as our Lord taught his Disciples; that they may be instructed in the Nature and Use of the two Sacraments instituted by our Saviour; and finally, as the Result of this Knowledge, that they may be early initiated in the Practice of all those Duties which make up a sober, righteous and godly Life.

3. BUT this leads me to conclude all with a short and serious Address to those who are immediately employed in the Education of these Children, the Masters and Mistresses of the CHARITY-SCHOOLS.

ALL that I shall say to you is, that those worthy Persons who employ you do reasonably expect; nay GOD himself, to whom you must give an Account of
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the Management of your Trust, doth expect, both that you should your selves give an Example of all manner of Piety and Virtue, and that you should apply your selves with much Diligence and Prudence to the forming the Tempers and Manners of the Children committed to your Care, as well as to the informing their Understandings, attending your Business not as those that would please Men only, but would approve your selves in the Sight of G O D. Teach them to be modest and humble, diligent and industrious, and above all, perfectly true and just both in Word and Deed. Insinuate into them a Sense of Almighty G O D, and the Apprehension of a future Life. Endeavour to awaken their Consciences in these their tender Years, that they may act upon Principles all the Days of their Lives. Give them an early Value for their Bibles, that they may ever look upon them as containing the great Rule of their Faith and Practice, that Rule by which they are to live, and by which they shall be judged. In a Word, manage them as Parents should do, (for you are in the Place of Parents to them) with that Prudence that may engage them both to fear and love you, as being convinc'd by your Behaviour towards them, that you have no other Design but to promote their temporal and spiritual Welfare. You are well employed, engaged in an excellent Work, highly acceptable to G O D, and useful to the World, if managed as it ought to be; and if you do your Part with Fidelity and Diligence, besides the present small Remuneration which you receive for your Pains, you will enjoy the Satisfaction of a good Conscience, from a Sense of having done your Duty; you will very often have the Pleasure of observing the good Effects of your
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Care in the Towardlinefs and the Improvement of your Charge ; and you will finally receive a full Recompence from G O D at the great Day of Account.

May Almighty G O D continue to prosper this Work ; may he ſhower down his Bleſſings abundantly both ſpiritual and temporal upon all that are heartily engaged in it ; may he bleſs theſe Children, and give them Grace always to remember the Obligations they are laid under by this kind Diſpenſation of his Providence towards them ; may he by the Grace of his holy Spirit conduct us all in the Paths of Wiſdom, Piety and Virtue, till he ſhall have brought us to his heavenly Kingdom, through J E S U S C H R I S T our Lord, to whom, with the Father and the Eternal Spirit, our great Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, be aſcribed all Praise and Glory now and for ever. Amen.



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S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

JUNE 1. 1710.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By GEORGE SMALRIDGE, D. D.

EXODUS II. 9, 10.

And Pharaoh's Daughter said unto Her, Take this Child away, and Nurse it for Me, and I will give Thee thy Wages. And the Woman took the Child, and nursed it. And the Child grew, and She brought Him unto Pharaoh's Daughter, and He became Her Son.

THE Inspir'd Books of *Moses* are, as it were;
One continued History of G O D's providential
Care of his chosen People: Many and
Wonderful are the Instances therein recorded
of the Interposal of the Almighty, in rescuing his Servants
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from imminent Dangers: But amongst these, None is more remarkable, None was attended with greater Consequences, than the Preservation of *Moses* from that Death, to which He was expos'd in his Infancy; and the Deliverance of Him, whom G O D had appointed to be the Deliverer of his People.

MEASURES had been taken at the Court of *Pharaoh*, for the utter Extirpation of the Children of *Israel*: And in Pursuance of these, an Edict had issued forth, that *every Son that was born unto them, should be cast into the River*, Exodus i. 22. Under these unhappy Circumstances *Moses* is born, by the Cruelty of his Prince destin'd to immediate Death, but by the Decrees of G O D reserv'd to be the Glorious Instrument, who was to execute His All-wise Purposes. All the Care that could be taken by a tender Mother for a lovely Child, was taken by the Mother of *Moses*, for his Preservation: *When she saw Him that He was a goodly Child, she hid Him three Months*, Ver. 2. But it seems the Enemy was as Vigilant for his Ruine, as his Parents could be for his Safety; and therefore the Concealment of Him was now no longer practicable.

IF He should be found in his Mother's Custody, He must inevitably perish; if He were expos'd abroad, He could but perish; and by some unusual Accident, rather to be wish'd, than to be hop'd for, He might possibly escape: To G O D's Providence therefore She commits Him, and *putting the Child into an Ark, lays it in the Flaggs by the Rivers brink*, Ver. 3. Nor was her signal Trust in G O D defeated: Her Hopes were more than answer'd; and all Things succeeded better, than She in her fondest Wishes could desire. By an happy Train of Events, *Pharaoh's* Daughter comes at that very Time

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to that very Place ; She spies the Ark, sends one of Her Retinue to fetch it, opens it, sees the Child Weeping, hath Compassion on Him, discovers it to be one of the *Hebrew* Children, sends for a Nurse of the *Hebrew* Women to nurse it ; who happens to be its own Mother ; and to whom, as to a Nurse, she delivers it to be brought up at Her Expence. From this entertaining Piece of Sacred History, there do naturally arise several Observations worthy of our Notice, and pertinent to the present Occasion.

AND *ist*, We may observe, how particular a Care the divine Providence takes of little Children. We find here a Child born of Parents under a State of Bondage and Persecution ; born to be a Slave, if perchance He should live ; but doom'd to expire from the very first Moment He should breathe ; sentenc'd to Destruction by that sovereign Power, from which by his native Right He might expect Protection ; destitute of all Help from Parents, Relations or Friends ; and abandon'd to numberless Accidents, any one of which might have prov'd fatal. In this desperate State, by the over-ruling Hand of GOD, Things are so order'd in his Behalf, that no Child born in the happiest Circumstances could be better provided for : that in the Nursing of Him no tender Care might be wanting, He is suckled by his own Mother ; and that the Child might not any Ways suffer by the Poverty of its Parents, a liberal Maintenance is afforded by the Bounty of his charitable Benefactress. Thus did that Infant, who, according to all humane Appearance, was forlorn and helpless, thro' GOD's Assistance, enjoy all those Advantages, which scarcely ever fall to the Lot of Children, born either of Mean, or of Noble Parentage. So peculiar a Providence as this,

is not perhaps to be exemplified in many other Instances: But Reason, Scripture, and Experience do all assure us, that the like Providential Care doth extend it self to other Children. *The Mercy of GOD is over All his Works*: From Him they have their Being, and by Him they subsist: *He sendeth forth his Spirit, and they are created*; He withdraws his Influence, and they die, and return to their Dust: and as All things are upheld only by his Power, so it is rational to conclude, that He proportions his Assistance to the Wants of his Creatures; and, like a tender Parent, shews the greatest Care towards those of his Off-spring, who are most weakly, and most stand in Need of his Help. Now little Children, by Reason of their natural Frailty, are liable to innumerable Casualties, from which grown Age is usually exempted; they can neither foresee Evils, when approaching; nor repel them, when at hand; nor support themselves under their Pressure: These natural Defects are therefore supplied by the GOD of Nature, and His Strength is made perfect in Their Weakness. And as the Imbecility of their Constitution doth render them proper Objects of that divine Aid, which is so necessary to them for their Support, so their spotless Innocence doth powerfully bespeak the singular Love and Favour of GOD. Whatever Title adult Persons might pretend to GOD's loving Kindness, as they are his Creatures, they may seem with Justice to have forfeited, as they are Sinners: but Young Children, as they have no Merits to give them any rightful Claim to the divine Favour, so neither have they any such flagrant Demerits, as may shut them out from the Benefit of his Protection.

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THIS Benefit therefore we are sure from the Word of GOD they do enjoy: This watchful Care over their Infancy, the Saints of GOD, when come to riper Years, have thankfully acknowledg'd; in the Catalogues of Mercies received thro' the Course of their Lives. Those, which either their own Memories have suggested to them, or their godly Parents have reminded them of, as conferr'd on them from Heaven, during their Childhood, have always found a Place; their Observation of GOD's Care of other Children has led them into a Sense, that the same Care has been taken of themselves, when by themselves it could not be observ'd: On the Experience they have had of the divine Goodness, manifested to them, whilst in a State of Infancy, they have built their Hopes of finding the like Support, when reduc'd to the like weak Condition by the Infirmities of Old Age. *Thou art my Hope, O Lord GOD, saith the Psalmist, Psal. lxxi. thou art my Trust from my Youth: By Thee have I been holden up from the Womb: Thou wast my Hope when I yet hanged upon my Mother's Breast: Cast me not off in the Time of Old Age; forsake me not when my Strength faileth, Psal. xxii.*

BUT we have a still stronger Testimony of GOD's peculiar Care of Children, from his Appointment of tutelar Angels to guard and protect them: For that there is such an Appointment, is the general Doctrine of the Church, grounded on that Precept of our Blessed Saviour, *Matt. xviii. 10. Take heed, that Ye despise not one of these little Ones; for I say unto You, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father, which is in Heaven.* That Children are every Moment wonderfully preserv'd from many fatal

Accidents, by the invisible Power of GOD, either immediately interposing, or acting by the Ministry of his holy Angels, Parents have the most sensible and most affecting Proof from their own happy Experience: For they must have been careless Observers of divine Providence, who have not taken notice of Many such wonderful Deliverances wrought within their own Families, such as are not to be accounted for by any Natural Causes; and they must be of very shallow Capacities, who do not from thence infer, that many more Deliverances of the like Kind must have been wrought, which have escap'd their Notice.

THE next Observation, which I shall make from the above-recited History, is this; That there is implanted by GOD in Humane Nature a strong Propension to Acts of Charity and Compassion. The Royal Princess, whose Charity is here recorded, was an utter Stranger to GOD's Revealed Will: He had not yet *shew'd his Word unto Jacob, nor deliver'd his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel*: these were to be given by the Hand of this very *Moses*, when come to the Ripeness of Manhood; much less had GOD manifested himself to other Nations, *neither had the Heathen Knowledge of his Laws*. But there was no need of a written Law to instruct Her in that Duty of helping the Distress'd, which was plainly taught Her by the Law of Nature.

AS SOON as Her Eyes were struck with the doleful Sight, as soon as the Cries of the Infant sounded in Her Ears, Her Bowels yearn'd within Her, and Her Heart was melted with Compassion. Without reasoning, without deliberating, push'd on by the secret and powerful Impulse of Nature, she affords an immediate Succour; and

and Her first Thoughts of what it became Her to do in so lamentable and pressing a Case were as just and rational, as if they had been the final Result of the coolest and most mature Deliberation.

THE very first Principle imprinted on the Mind of sociable Creatures by the Finger of GOD seems to be this, That they should do no wrong to any; the next, that they should do all the good possible to those, who want their Assistance. This Duty therefore of helping the Helpless, those who had no other Light to guide their Actions by, but that of Reason, found themselves plainly instructed in by the Reflections, which they made on their own Inclinations, Sentiments, and Dispositions. This is a Duty, to which they own'd themselves Born, for which they acknowledg'd they were Made; and without which they could give no rational Account, why their Natures should be so fram'd, as in Fact they found they were. For when they took Notice of what pass'd within their own Breasts, they could not but observe, that when any Object of Compassion was presented to them, they were, without debating about it, immediately struck with Pity, and forcibly carried away with an impatient Desire of contributing to the Removal of that Misery, which made the Spectators, as well as the Sufferer of it, uneasy: They found that Sympathy betwixt themselves, and others of the same Nature with themselves, that they could not look upon another's Calamity, without being themselves touch'd, and as it were infected with it; and that therefore to deny Relief to the Distress'd, was to offer Violence to their own Natures, and to be in the severest Manner cruel to their own Flesh and Blood.

THEY observ'd farther, That when they reach'd out Help to those, who wanted it, there immediately sprang up in their Minds an inexpressible Joy and Satisfaction; in the actual doing of Good they felt a sensible Pleasure and Delight: And when afterwards they at Leisure took a Review of their Acts of Charity, they could not but applaud themselves for them, and think the Pleasure they found in that Self-Approbation, a sufficient Reward for what they had done; and yet, at the same Time, as the Wisest of them judg'd, an Earnest of some unknown greater Reward still in Reserve. This eager Propension of Mind to assist the Indigent, and to help the Helpless, they lookt upon to be so suitable to the Nature of Man, that this one Virtue carried away from all Others the peculiar Name of Humanity. They thought therefore they could not be deaf to the Importunities of the Necessitous, and harden their Hearts against the Supplications of the Distress'd, without forfeiting the Title of Men, and degenerating into the Rank of barbarous and cruel Savages. Upon these Natural Principles did those, who consulted their unassisted Reason, prove the Necessity of being compassionate and charitable; suitably to these the Best of them acted, and stand to this Day recorded in the Histories of their several Ages and Countries, for eminent Acts of Beneficence and Goodness; to their own immortal Honour, and to the just and indelible Reproach of those, who are less careful to discharge this Duty under the Sense of much nobler Principles, and much stronger Obligations.

I don't know whether under this Head it may not be proper to observe farther, that this strong Propension towards Acts of Pity and Compassion, which is im-

implanted in Humane Nature, is generally speaking most strong and most operative in Women. That noble Princess, whose generous Pity towards a poor helpless Infant, is here registred by Her grateful Beneficiary, must be endued with a more than ordinary Degree of Tenderness; because it is hard to assign any other Principle, which could excite Her to act as She did, and easie to alledge several other Motives, which, had they not been over-rul'd by this, might probably have restrain'd Her from so acting. She was bred up amidst the Luxuries of a Court; and it is not usual for Persons, who abound in all manner of Plenty, who are inur'd to Ease and Delicacy, and seldom meet with any Thing that may disquiet or molest them, to be affected with a deep Sense of the Calamities of Others. Those, who have themselves felt the Smart of Miseries, are apt to have a Fellow-feeling of the Sufferings of the Miserable; and those, who have hitherto been Prosperous, but have Reason to fear that they may shortly be overtaken by Adversity, may be brib'd by Self-Interest to afford that Relief, which they themselves should be glad to find in the Day of their Distress. But those, who have enjoy'd a constant Flow of uninterrupted Pleasure, have no inward Sense of the Bitterness of Pain to quicken their Compassion; and those, who, by the Affluence of all the good Things of Life, seem to be plac'd without the Reach of Adversity, may be less solicitous to lend that Aid, which they themselves have no probable Occasion of ever Borrowing. It is the Observation of the Prophet concerning those, *Amos vi. 4. who lie upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches; who eat the Lambs out of the Flocks, and the Calves out of the midst of the*
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the Stall; who chaunt to the Sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves Instruments of Musick; who drink Wine in Bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief Ointments; that they are not griev'd for the Affliction of Joseph. And if such an affectionate Concern for the Affliction of Joseph is not to be hop'd for, even in those of his own Kindred, whilst in the Height of their Gaiety, much less was it to be expected in One, who, by Birth, and by the Prejudices of Education, was dispos'd to be an Enemy. The Israelites were scorn'd and hated by the Egyptians; their utter Extinction was resolv'd upon; every Male-Child was by Pharaoh's Decree proscrib'd: And She might seem to be no good Egyptian, no loyal Subject, no dutiful Daughter, who should spare, who should favour, who should cherish One, that stood condemn'd by the common Vote of her Country, her Prince, and her Father. But the Tenderness of her Sex pleaded more strongly for her shewing Pity, than all these Considerations could do against it; they might have hardened the Heart of a Son of Pharaoh, but they were not of Force enough to prevail upon his Daughter.

FOR very wise and good Purposes hath GOD been pleas'd to form this Softness of Temper, this Sweetness of Disposition, this powerful Bent towards Acts of Pity and Compassion, in the very Frame and Constitution of Women: The bringing up of Children from the first Years of their Infancy is Their allotted Province; in the Discharge of This many Hardships are to be undergone, many Disquietudes are to be born, which, tho' otherwise troublesome and vexatious enough, yet the Tenderness of their Affections makes them pass thorough, not only with Patience and Contentment, but even with
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Cheerfulness and Delight : It is this Tendernefs, which makes that Sex fo quick to difcern, and fo prompt to relieve the Wants of Children : to this Tendernefs, under GOD's Bleffing, We all of Us owe it, that We died not from the Womb, that We have escap'd manifold Hazards in our Child-hood, and that when in our grown Years We have at any Time been confin'd to the Bed of Sicknefs, We have ftill found Comfort in it, and have rofe again from it. It is not to be denied, that here and there an Inftance may be given of Want of Pity, or perhaps even of extraordinary Degrees of Barbarity in Women ; but at the fame Time it muft be own'd, that fuch Women are look'd upon as Monsters in Nature ; that they are fuppos'd to have long ftuggled with, and at laft to have overcome the innate Softnefs of their Sex ; and that for the moft part, it is obfervable, that as Strength of Mind and of Body, Prudence in Council, and Courage in War, are the diftinguifhing Characters of Men ; fo Gentlenefs, Kindnefs, Bowels of Mercies, Tendernefs of Heart, Acts of Love and Charity, of Pity and Compaffion, are the peculiar Graces and Ornaments of Women.

OUR 3^d Obfervation from the Hiftory premis'd fhall be this ; That generous Souls, the more Kindnefs they have fhewn to the Indigent, the more ftroingly they are inclin'd to be ftill farther kind to the fame Perfons. It was a great Degree of Kindnefs in *Pharaoh's* Daughter to fpare an *Hebrew* Child ; it was a ftill greater to take Care of it, and to defray the Charge of its Maintenance ; but her Bounty ftopt not here : The Child, when grown up, is brought Home to Her, and becomes her Son. Mean and Narrow Minds are apt to be very fparing and frugal of their Favours : When they have
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bestow'd one Kindness, they wait for some Return, before they go on to confer another ; it is their Business to traffick for good Turns, and therefore, like wise Merchants, they are unwilling to venture too much upon one Bottom : Where they sow, there they expect to reap, and think a second Seeds-time comes too quick, if it returns before the Harvest. But Persons, who are truly and sincerely charitable, who act upon noble and disinterested Principles, do good for the Sake of doing good ; it is the single Design of their Charity, that it may be useful to others, and whilst it is so useful, they have their Aim : The Epicure himself doth not find half that Pleasure in his Sensuality, as These do in Acts of Bounty and Beneficence : If a Return be made by the Persons oblig'd, they are glad to find that their Favours are bestow'd on the deserving and thankful ; and if they meet with no Recompence for their Benefactions here upon Earth, their Prospect is enlarg'd, and they look forwards to those more glorious Rewards, which are reserv'd for the Charitable at the great Day of Retribution. They are not therefore likely to be weary in Well-doing ; because whatever be the Dispositions of those, to whom they are bountiful, be the Soil, in which they sow their Seed, never so barren and unkindly, *Yet they know, that in due Season they shall reap, if they faint not.*

CHARITY, as it beareth the nearest Resemblance to the Image of GOD ; so like Him, it delighteth to perfect all its Works ; nor is a skilful Artist more uneasie in leaving his Work unfinish'd, or a tender Parent in seeing his Child defective in any of its Limbs, than a charitable Person is in desisting from a good Work, well-design'd, happily begun, and so far as it is gone,
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answerable to his Wishes, before he has put to it his last Hand, and rendred it entire and compleat. The Gospel hath given us a charming Picture of a Person throughly charitable, in the Parable of the good *Samaritan*, Luke x. His Offices of Kindness closely follow'd one another in a continued Train, and there was no stint of his Bounty, till there was no further Occasion for it. *He saw as He journeyed, a poor Traveller, stript of his Raiment, wounded, and half Dead: He had Compassion on Him, went to him, bound up his Wounds, pour'd in Oyl and Wine, set Him on his own Beast, brought Him to an Inn, took Care of Him whilst he staid, and when He departed, gave to the Host both Money in Hand, and an unlimited Commission for defraying any farther Expence; Take care of Him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay Thee.*

ANOTHER Observation, which we may gather from the History before us, is this: That those are rather to be esteem'd the Parents of Children, who give them good Education, than those to whom they owe their Birth. *Moses* was by Birth an *Hebrew*, descended of a Son, and of a Daughter of *Levi*: But because He was educated by the Care, and at the Expence of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, according to his own Account, *He became her Son*. The Mother indeed of *Moses*, was not less his Mother, tho' she expos'd him, because She was compell'd to it by Necessity: But had She done this out of a wicked Principle, She would by such an Act of unnatural Cruelty have forfeited that Title of a Mother, which belong'd to Her, as having conceiv'd, and born Him. Great is the Debt which Children owe to their Parents, who are under God the Bestowers of Life

Life upon them, and the Authors of their Beings: But Life it self is no other Ways valuable, than as it puts us into a Capacity of Happiness; if therefore an early Provision be made, that in the Course of it, it may prove happy, it is then a Blessing, which we cannot be too thankful for; because it is the Foundation of all other Blessings: But if for Want of a good and virtuous Education, Men are left destitute of the necessary Means of rendring themselves happy; if by the Fault of their Parents, Misery be entail'd upon them; then that Life, which carries with it this Encumbrance, is a Curse instead of a Blessing; and the conferring it is to be lookt upon rather as an Injury hardly to be forgiven, than as a Benefit which deserves our Acknowledgment. What Notions Men have of the Valuableness of Life, merely on Account of its own intrinsick Worth; how far they are from esteeming either the Gift, or Continuance of it, a Benefit, when it is attended with Misery, is evident from these bitter Complaints of *Job*, in the Extremity of his Agony; when *He curst his Day, and said, Job iii. 3. Let the Day perish, wherein I was born; and the Night, wherein it was said, there is a Man-child conceived. Why died I not from the Womb? Why did I not give up the Ghost, when I came out of the Belly? Wherefore is Light given unto Him that is in Misery, and Life unto the bitter in Soul?* Doth one, who inveighs in this manner against Life, look upon it as a Thing always good and desirable? Would He thank those, who foreseeing it would prove thus wretched, had forc'd it upon Him? But above all, would He esteem them his Friends and Benefactors, who contriv'd to render his Condition thus woful and deplorable? Such Friends, such Benefactors are those Parents, who

who having brought Children into a World full of Misery and Wickedness, take no farther Concern for them, but leave them void of all useful Knowledge; destitute and naked, neglected and forsaken; unarm'd against Temptations, an easie Prey to that ravenous Lion, who is always *going about, seeking whom he may devour*. Forlorn and hopeless is the State of such Children, unless rescued from Destruction by some charitable Hand; Unworthy therefore are those of the Name of Parents, Unwarrantable are their Pretensions to the Love and Honour due to Parents, in whom the Parental Affection is quite extinguish'd; to Them doth this Name more properly belong, upon Them are the Rights and Privileges of Parentage deservedly transferr'd, who are moved with the Affections of Parents, and by whom the Offices of Parents are readily and constantly perform'd.

THERE are other proper Reflections, which do naturally arise from this instructive History. We might from hence observe, that Acts of Compassion and Charity add a new Lustre to Persons eminent for their Rank and Dignity: That Almighty GOD, tho' He could supply the Wants of the Miserable by his own immediate Hand, yet chooses to reach forth his Gifts unto Men by the Ministry of Men: That Charity ought not to be limited to those of our own Countrey, or of our own Perswasion, but to be extended even to such as are of a different Nation, or different Religion from us; that Persons of mean Birth, and such as are bred up by the Charity of Others, do sometimes arrive at the highest Degrees of Honour, and do become eminently serviceable both to their own Generation, and to Posterity. These Observations might be easily deduc'd
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from this Story, and to Advantage be enlarg'd upon, were it not Time to apply what hath been deliver'd to that happy Occasion, for which we are now met together in this solemn and large Assembly.

It hath been observ'd in the first Place, how particular a Care GOD's Providence takes of little Children: Of this we have one remarkable Instance in the Child *Moses*, and of this we have as many present and living Instances, as there do now stand poor Children before us. When we cast our Eyes upon this pleasing Spectacle, (a Spectacle delightful in the Sight of Men, of Angels, and of GOD) when we reflect on the apparent Hazards of Body and Soul, to which each of these little Ones was by the Circumstances of its Birth left expos'd; when we consider the happy Condition, in which, by the Providence of GOD, and the Charity of God-like Persons, they are now plac'd; when we carry our Thoughts forward to the manifold Blessings, which we plainly foresee will hence redound to Themselves, to their Families, to these populous Cities, to the whole Kingdom, to the Establish'd Church, yea, and if we are not mistaken in our just Hopes, to distant Countries, and to succeeding Generations; We cannot but look upon them, as so many little *Moses*'s, drawn, as it were, out of the Water, rescu'd from the very Brink of Destruction, exemplifying in our Days, to the very Senses of Unbelievers, what the Faithful are perswaded of from the Holy Scriptures, concerning GOD's Providential Care of little Children.

Now the natural Influence, which all should make from hence, and which many, who hear me, have both already made, and long since put into Practice, is this; That it is their Duty to concur with the gracious Designs of GOD, and to look upon those as worthy of
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their most tender Care, who are the Darlings of Providence, and the Almighty's most peculiar Favourites. G O D's Treasures are not so scanty, G O D's Power is not so limited, but that He is able to subsist all his Creatures, without leaving some to depend upon the Benevolence of others ; He could have so order'd the Course of Nature, that Children should not have wanted Support from those who are grown up ; and He could dispense his Blessings with so equal an Hand, that there should be no Poor to be maintained at the Expence of the Rich : He, who at the Prayer of *Moses*, rained down *Manna* upon the *Israelites*, for to eat, and gave them Food from Heaven, could have fed the Infant *Moses* with Angels Food, and have supported him with his own immediate Hand. But He chose rather to convey his Blessings through another Channel, and to make *Pharaoh's* Daughter do unto him the Office of a Mother, that there might be room for the Exercise of Charity ; and that He might shew his Goodness as well towards Her, who had the welcome Opportunity of affording, as towards Him, who wanted, and who receiv'd Relief.

WHAT Honour can accrue unto mortal Men greater than this, of being the Instruments of G O D in dispensing his Gifts to their Fellow-Creatures ! How desirous must good Men be of the Opportunity, how greedy of the Pleasure, how ambitious of the Glory of working together with G O D, in that Labour of Love, in which his infinite Goodness doth most delight ! When we reach out unto helpless Children any Blessing, either temporal or spiritual, either conducive to their Happiness in this World, or in the next, We are the immediate Conveyers, but G O D is the original Bestower of every such Gift ; and what G O D said of *Moses* in Rela-

tion to his Brother *Aaron*, is true of every charitable Benefactor in Reference to the Person reliev'd by him, *He is unto him instead of GOD*: Our Blessed Saviour said of himself, whilst He was here upon Earth, *Job. v. 19. what Things soever the Father doeth; these also doeth the Son likewise*; and as He copied after the Pattern set by his Father in all other Respects, so did He more especially in his affectionate Tenderness towards little Children. His exceeding Love, his unparallel'd Humility, his mighty Condescension, as they appear'd visibly in all the Circumstances of his Birth, of his Life, and of his Death; so were they more eminently conspicuous in that passionate Concern, which He in his Discourses so warmly express'd, and in his Actions so apparently shew'd towards young Children. Since therefore it hath appear'd from the History of *GOD's* Providence towards the Child *Moses*, that the Care of our heavenly Father doth in a more peculiar Manner extend it self towards little Children; since it is evident from the Gospel, that our Saviour's tender Concern for them was by his Words, by his Gestures, by his Deeds, plainly manifested; those, who desire to approve themselves the Children of *GOD*, what their heavenly Father doeth in regard to these little Ones, the same will they do likewise; those, who would shew themselves the true Disciples of *CHRIST*, will take Care that the same Dispositions of Mind, the same Love and Compassion, the same Goodness and Condescension, towards little Children, be conspicuous in them, which *were also in CHRIST JESUS*.

OUR second Observation was, That *GOD* hath implanted in humane Nature a strong Propension to Acts of Pity and Compassion. When we, who are the Mini-

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sters of the Gospel, do, in Discharge of our high Trust, exhort Christians to the severe Doctrines of Humiliation and Repentance, of Mortification and Self-Denial; of bearing grievous Injuries with Patience, and stifling all Thoughts of Revenge; We speak unto our Hearers with some Disadvantage; because though Reason and Religion are on our Side, yet Passion and Inclination are against us; but when we call upon them to be charitable to the Poor, to relieve the Distress'd, to help the Helpless, we do not find it so extremely difficult to prevail: Because Mens natural Affections plead the same Cause as we do, and enforce it with more powerful Rhetorick, than we can pretend to: We have nothing farther in such Cases to ask of our Auditors, than that they would follow the Bent of their own Inclinations; that they would not struggle against the Force of Nature; that they would not deny themselves that sensible Pleasure, which arises from doing good; that they would not quench the Motions of Pity and Tenderneſs, which they feel in their own Breasts, and which they are not able to subdue without offering Violence to themselves, and being cruel to their own Flesh, which crave Acts of Mercy from them with greater Earnestness and Importunity, than do those very Supplicants, who call for Relief. Were those, to whom we address our selves on these pressing Occasions, utterly unacquainted with divine Revelation; had they never heard of the Name of CHRIST; had they never learnt, what excellent Precepts he hath given, what a winning Example he hath set, what powerful Motives he hath propos'd, to enforce the Duty of Charity; yet there is a Law written in the Tables of their own Hearts, which is sufficient to instruct them in this Duty, in which they

cannot be wanting, whilst they remember that they are Men, altho' they should forget that they are also Christians. But tho' Nature be of it self a strong Spur to Acts of Beneficence, yet will it exert it self more vigorously, when animated by a Principle of Religion, by an ardent Love of GOD, and by the certain Hopes of a future Recompence. Those temporal Wants of our Brethren, which strongly affect our Senses, will move Pity in the Breast of a good-natur'd Man, tho' unregenerate and void of Grace; but Faith alone can inspire us with a just Sense of their spiritual Wants, and an earnest Desire to relieve them.

— WHEN we contemplate the infinite Love of CHRIST towards the Souls of Men; when we seriously consider, that the Salvation of Souls was the Occasion of his Birth, the Business of his Life, and the End of his Death; that for this End he emptied himself of the Glories of his God-head, *took upon him the Form of a Servant, and became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross*; that to procure this, he left the Joys of Heaven, and descended to the nethermost Parts of Hell; that to make way for this, he sent his Messengers before him, and to promote this, he left his Apostles behind him; that the Mission of the Holy Ghost was in Prosecution of this Design, and that this is the Object of his continual Intercession at GOD's right Hand; that the Mercies, which GOD bestow'd on his ancient People the *Jews*, were only faint Types of this greater Deliverance to prefigure it to the Ages past; and that the Sacraments, which he hath instituted, are Memorials of this Mercy to all Generations to come; that all the Return which our Saviour expects from us, for these wonderful Instances of his Love towards us, is, that *We*

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also love one another ; that Charity is the distinguishing Character of CHRIST'S Disciples ; that it was his last dying Command ; that it is the Rule by which he will try us at the last Day ; that a more exceeding Weight of Glory is reserv'd for those, who are the Instruments of bringing others to Heaven ; and that they, *that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever* : These Considerations, often ponder'd in our Thoughts, duly attended unto, and suffer'd to sink deeply in our Hearts, will inflame us with an intense Love to the Souls of Men, will make us solicitous to find out Methods for promoting their eternal Happiness, will certainly determine us with all Gladness to embrace those proper Opportunities, which these CHARITY-SCHOOLS afford to every well-dispos'd Christian, of being under CHRIST a Deliverer of his Brother's Soul. If any therefore, who are call'd by the Name of Christians, do steel their Hearts against all the Dictates of Humanity, and Obligations of the Gospel ; if they wilfully resist the Motions both of Nature and of Grace ; if they obstinately refuse, out of their Superfluities, to supply the craving Wants of their Brethren ; if they can see a poor abandon'd Child ready to starve for Want of the Necessaries of Life, or in Danger of perishing everlastingly for the lack of Saving Knowledge, and not reach forth an helping Hand to rescue such an One, the Daughter of *Pharaoh shall rise up in Judgment* against such inhumane Christians : For She took Compassion on the Child *Moses*, and behold a greater than *Moses* is here : For, according to our Saviour's Construction, *Matt. xxv. 40, 45. what is done, or not done unto the least of these his Brethren, is either done, or not done unto Him.*

UNDER this second Head, I took Notice, that this natural Propension towards Acts of Pity and Charity is usually strongest in Women; of which the Text gives us a remarkable Instance, in the generous Act of *Pharaob's Daughter*. But we need not look backwards into ancient History, or go out of our own Kingdom, for an Example of a ROYAL BENEFACTRESS, Eminent for Her tender Compassion, and liberal Bounty towards poor, destitute, and helpless Children. Amongst the many and signal Proofs, which our most Gracious Sovereign hath given, of Her real and sincere Kindness for this Church, and of Her tender Concern for its Welfare and Prosperity, We have Reason to look upon this as none of the least, that all charitable and pious Designs, which have been form'd for advancing its Honour and Interest, both at Home and Abroad, have always been by Her countenanc'd and encourag'd. * One of these Nurseries of Religious Education, erected lately near Her Palace, and growing up under Her more immediate Influence, is constantly refresh'd by plentiful Streams in a liberal Manner flowing from Her Royal Bounty: † Another of them She hath been Graciously pleas'd to **Incorporate, in order to make a more solid Foundation for its Support and Maintenance:** What *Pharaob's Daughter* said unto the *Hebrew Woman*, to whom She committed the Care of the Child *Moses*, the same our Gracious QUEEN, by the Tenour of Her Royal Charter, hath said to the Trustees of that Hospital, *Take these Children, and nurse them for Me.* And tho' She hath not yet added Her Royal Promise, that

* Charity-School at *Kensington*.

† The Grey-Coat Hospital in *Totbill-Fields*, of the Royal Foundation of Queen *ANNE*.

that She will out of Her own Treasure defray their Expences, yet from Her known Goodness they are secure, that the Nursery, which Her own Hand hath planted, shall by the same Hand be water'd also in due Season. By such Acts of Beneficence and Condescension do Religious Princes, who are the Substitutes and Representatives of Heaven here upon Earth, best resemble the Goodness of the Lord their G O D, who *dwelling on high, humbleth himself to behold* the very meanest of his Creatures, and *raiseth up the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth the Needy out of the Dunghil.*

O U R third Observation was, That generous Souls, the more kind they have been to any, the kinder they are dispos'd still to be; the more they have been exercis'd in Deeds of Charity, the stronger Propensions do they find in themselves to abound in this Labour of Love still more and more. Of this we have an Historical Instance in the Noble Benefactress of the Text, and of this we have a nearer and more delightful Proof in the liberal Contributions that have been, and are constantly given to these charitable Schools. In one of them *, which I may with the more Decency single out, both because of my more immediate Relation to it, and because being the first of this Kind, it may modestly challenge some sort of Precedency by right of Primogeniture, I find enroll'd in the List of its present Benefactors, many Names which have stood there since its first Foundation; And I have no Reason to doubt, but what I know to be true, of the continual Support, which hath been given to the Eldest of these Sisters, is equally so in Reference to the Younger.

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* The School for Blue-Coats belonging to the New-Church in *Westminster*, Erected *A. D.* 1688.

WITH Persons, not by Goodness of Nature strongly dispos'd to Acts of Humanity, not by the Grace of GOD powerfully stirred up to charitable Deeds, it may be a plausible Argument against expending more on the same Occasion, that they have already expended very much; but those, whose Souls are throughly possess'd with an ardent Desire of doing Good; those who have a just and lively Sense of the indispensable Obligations, which our holy Religion layeth upon us, to abound in all Acts of Brotherly Love without Ceasing, and without Weariness, are used to argue after a different Manner; and do think it a forcible Motive to their contributing cheerfully and largely towards any good Work, that their Liberality towards it hath on former Occasions been eminent and conspicuous. Were the Rewards promis'd to our Charity stinted and limited, it would then be more reasonable, that our Charity also should be confin'd within certain Limits, beyond which it should not pass; but be it in its Objects never so extensive, be it in its Measures never so much enlarg'd, be it in its Fruits never so luxuriant, sure we are, that on a still fuller Measure than we mete withal, it shall be measur'd unto us again: *Good Measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall be given into our Bosom.* As these CHARITY-SCHOOLS have from their first Erection thriven and encreas'd by those Supplies, which have been constantly and liberally afforded to them; as they have from low Beginnings been gradually advanced to their present Height; so would the pious Contributors thereto take an Estimate of the State which their own Fortunes were then in, when they first reach'd forth their Bounty, and compare it with their present Circumstances, I doubt not but they would, to their

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Comfort, find, that their own Wealth hath grown together with these charitable Funds; that they have encreas'd the Poor's Stock without any Decrease of their own; nay farther, that their own Heap is become larger by those Supplies, which they have given out of it for the Support and Maintenance of these growing Benefactions. What they have thus lent unto the Lord, hath already been repaid them with Interest, in Private, and in Publick Blessings; and they have found their Charity abundantly recompens'd in those great Mercies which GOD hath even in this World bestow'd upon them, upon their Families, upon our Church and Nation: which yet, great as they are, shall not be accounted by GOD as a full Payment, but are only Earnests and Pledges of a still more ample Recompence at the great Day of Retribution.

OUR last Observation was, That Children owe more to those from whom they have their Education, than they do to those from whom they derive their Birth. It is a melancholy Reflection, that any should be born within the Pale of the Christian Church, and yet be Strangers to the saving Truths of the Gospel: Nevertheless it is not to be dissembled, that there are some, who live in thick *Ægyptian* Darknefs, even in the midst of *Goshen*. It is therefore wisely provided, that Societies should be form'd as well for Propagating Christian Knowledge amongst the Ignorant at Home, as amongst Infidels Abroad. By this wholesome Institution, that Religious Education, which many Children did either through the Poverty, or through the Neglect of their natural Parents, to their great Damage want, is through the Liberality of well-dispos'd Christians, who are their better, their spiritual Parents, to their great Comfort

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supplied. Many a poor *Moses*, who is expos'd to the wide World, and left forlorn and helpless, for a Prey to the Destroyer, is happily rescued from Perdition by the Providential Interposál of Persons, who finding him in this miserable State, and mov'd with Pity of his wretched Case, condescend *to lift him out of the Mire*, and take Care that he be put into the Hands of his Mother the Church, by her to be nurs'd, *to suck, and be satisfied with the Breasts of her Consolations*; *to be born upon her Sides, and to be dandled on her Knees*, and by her instructed, not in the Wisdom of the *Ægyptians*, but in a much more valuable Part of Learning, the saving Knowledge of CHRIST.

By this Charity so well design'd, so happily executed, and so widely spread, that Invitation, which the Prophet *Isaiah* makes in the Name of CHRIST, and publishes to all the World, is brought Home to Thousands, to above Ten Thousands of poor Children within this Kingdom. *Ho every one that thirsteth, Come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money: Come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy without Money, and without Price.* By the Liberality of the Wealthy, abounding in Plenty, and Rich in good Works, the Holy Scriptures, those Fountains of everlasting Life, are open'd to the Poor; to their Bounty these poor Babes owe *that sincere Milk of the Word*, which is freely and without Price dispens'd to them, *that they may grow thereby*; through their Beneficence, the spiritually *Blind see, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleans'd, Devils are cast out, the Dead in Sin are rais'd, and to the Poor the Gospel is preach'd.* And now do not those, who are thus careful to supply the bodily and the spiritual Wants of these poor destitute Children, and to give them such a Liberal and Christian Education as may put them into a Way of
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living comfortably in this World, and of arriving at eternal Bliss in the next, highly deserve the Appellation; are they not justly entituled to the Honour, not only of Patrons and Benefactors, but even of Parents and Fathers! Will not the indigent Wretches, who by their Paternal Care are brought up *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, be powerful Intercessors for them at the Throne of Grace? And if *the Curses of the Poor*, which in the Bitterness of their Souls they pour out against those who are deaf to their Complaints, *shall be heard of him that made them*, will not the Prayers of these poor Foster Children, which they daily offer up unto GOD from the Bottom of their Hearts, in Behalf of those, whom he hath made his Instruments in supplying their Wants, be graciously accepted by him?

OF the unwearied Industry of these Patrons, these Guardians, these Parents of Youth, in soliciting Charities for their adopted Children, and their frugal Management in dispensing what they have gather'd; of their strict Caution, in chusing the most proper Objects without private Views or partial Regards; of their conscientious Endeavour to approve themselves in the Sight of GOD, by doing such Things as are just and honest; and their commendable Willingness to approve themselves in the Sight of Men also, by laying open a distinct Account of their Receipts and Expences to publick View and Scrutiny; of their wise Oeconomy and exact Discipline in regulating their large Families in such comely Order and Method, that Devotions and Instructions do in their Turns succeed each other in a constant and agreeable Vicissitude; of their pious Care that the Children should frequently be catechiz'd in Publick, so that Crowds of Hearers may together with
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them be instructed in the Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline of our Church, which, that they may be duly reverenc'd, want only to be rightly understood; of their strict Care, that the Children of both Sexes should be plac'd under the Custody and Inspection of such Masters and Mistresses, who may teach them Piety and Vertue as well by their Examples, as by their Instructions; of their frequent Exhortations to these Teachers, that they would answer the great Trust repos'd in them by a conscientious Discharge of their respective Duties; of their seasonable Admonitions to the Parents of the Children, that they would not by Domestick Examples of Vice spoil the Influence of those good Precepts, which had been instill'd into their Minds at School: Of these Things, I say, I am the more willing to make this short Mention, because I am neither afraid, that they will be thought at present undeserving of these Praises, nor apprehensive, that by their Remissness for the Time to come, *We, that We say not, They should be asham'd in this same confident Boasting.*

To the Testimony of those, who have resorted to the publick Exercises of these poor Children, or who have view'd the comely Order of their Processions, or who have been this Day Eye-Witnesses of their decent and religious Behaviour in the House of GOD, I appeal, whether they have not on these Occasions been struck with Delight and Admiration; whether they have not acknowledg'd, that *what they have seen with their Eyes did much exceed the Fame that they had heard:* Whether they have not from the Bottom of their Hearts, wish'd Success to the Managers of this Charity, saying, *The Lord prosper you. We wish you good Luck in the Name of the Lord.*

OF this happy Success there would be a still fairer Prospect ; That general Reformation of Manners, which is so much talkt of by all Pretenders to Piety, so heartily wish'd by all sincere Christians, so mightily dreaded by the Enemies of GOD and Godliness, would more speedily be brought about ; if whilst private Men are thus industrious to prevent the farther Growth of Vice by an early Instruction of those, who are yet untainted with it, in the *Principles of Religion*, publick Magistrates would at the same Time be equally zealous in extirpating Profaneness and Immorality, where they have already taken deep Root, by a steady, regular, and impartial Execution of the Laws. Those who are brought up in the Belief of a GOD, and of a Future State, will be restrain'd from Sin by a Sense of Duty to their Maker and Saviour, or by Fear of those Punishments, which are threatned to the Wicked : But those, who deny the Existence of a GOD, and the Immortality of their own Souls ; those who have no Notions of Good or Evil, but what strikes forcibly upon their Senses, must be wrought upon by other Motives : They live only for the present, and nothing but what is present can touch them ; they live entirely by Sense, and nothing but what is sensible can affect them : No Appeals to the Consciences of such Men will be heard ; because they are past feeling : No Arguing with them upon the Principles of Religion will avail, because these are derided and exploded by them : They govern themselves by no higher a Principle than Brutes do, and ought therefore to be kept in Order by the same sort of Discipline : *A Whip for the Ass, a Bridle for the Horse, and a Rod for the Fool's Back*, are Corrections each proportion'd to the Capacities of the

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Sufferer. This Chastisement the Magistrate owes, both to the Profligate, that they may, if possible, be reclaim'd; and to the Innocent, that they may not be infected; This Suppression of Irreligion and Vice, by *executing Wrath upon Evil-doers*, the Voice of the whole Nation doth now seem to call for; This our Religious Prince hath often recommended from the Throne; This GOD requires at the Hands of those, to whom he hath given the Sword of Justice, and from whom he expects *that they bear it not in vain*.

To Magistrates it appertains to approve themselves *Parents of their People*, by correcting those Sons that are stubborn and rebellious; to those, who are the Trustees for managing these publick Charities, belongs that milder Office of Parents, which consists in Nourishing, in Maintaining, in Instructing their Children.

AND whilst they shall proceed to carry on this good Work with the same godly Zeal, the same unwearied Diligence, the same unspotted Integrity, the same prudent Management, the same disinterested Intentions, the same perfect Concord and Unanimity, the same holy Emulation unmixt with Envy, there is no Reason to doubt, but they will meet with the same Blessings from the Poor, the same Encouragement from the Rich, the same Applauses of all good Men, the same Satisfaction in their own Consciences, and the same Benediction from Heaven.



A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of

St. SEPULCHRE,

MAY 24. 1711.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By ANDREW SNAPE, D. D.

MATTH. XI. 25.

At that Time JESUS answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these Things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes.



HERE is no visible Connexion between these Words, and what pass'd immediately before; nor is it clearly evident, or generally agreed, what it was that gave Occasion to our Lord, thus to *rejoyce in Spirit*, and to break out into these Expressions of Praise and Thankfulness

fulness to his heavenly Lord and Father. He is said *to answer*, tho' there is nothing in the whole Chapter, but that Question propounded to him in the Beginning of it, by Two of *John's* Disciples, that needs an Answer, or will admit of one; so that we can understand no more by that Phrase, but his continuing to speak, and proceeding in his Discourse; or else replying upon himself with Reference to some Subject, whereon he had been secretly ruminating in his Mind.

THE Words that have the greatest Affinity with those now before us of any in the Chapter, are what we read in the End of the 5th Verse: *The Poor have the Gospel preached unto them.* Which *Poor* in that Verse, seems plainly to design the same Persons with *Babes* in this: Those Things which were *bid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto Babes*, we may naturally interpret of the glad Tidings of that *Gospel*, which *the Poor had preached unto them*: The Poverty in one Place, and the Infancy in the other, are of the same Extent, both have an Allegorical Meaning besides the plain and literal One, and imply not only a Meanness of Fortune, and Depression as to outward Circumstances, but a Poverty of Spirit and Dejectedness of Mind; not only the Weakness and Ignorance, but the artless and undisguised Simplicity, the Openness, Candour, and Submission of a little Child: Such a State, in short, as had both the greatest Need of spiritual Instruction, and was best qualified to receive it. These were the *Poor*, to whom the *Gospel was preach'd*; these the *Babes*, to whom *those Things* were thought fit to be *reveal'd* which were *bid from the worldly wise*.

THE only Difference between the two Passages seems to be, that what our Saviour had urg'd in the 5th Verse,

Verse, as a Proof of his own Mission, and an Argument that he was the true Messiah, he makes another Use of at this 25th Verse, where (after a pretty long Digression, containing a Character of St. *John Baptist*, and a Reproof to those uncorrigible, unbelieving Cities, in which he had chiefly wrought his Miracles,) he takes Occasion from the high Satisfaction he found in the Success and Efficacy of his Doctrine, to improve the same Reflexion on his converting the Poor, and Illumination of the Dark and Ignorant, by which he had establish'd his own Credit, to the Exaltation of his Father's Name. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast bid these Things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes.*

FROM which Words, whether so connected or not with the above-mentioned Passage toward the Beginning of the Chapter, yet at least as fit to be compar'd with it, as concurring in the same Design, and establishing the same important Truth, we may not improperly take a Handle for considering the following Points.

I. THAT the Revealing the Mysteries of Christianity to those who were destitute of all saving Knowledge, but were spiritually *Poor*, and *Babes* in Understanding, was both a proper Evidence of our Saviour's divine Mission, and a just Matter of Praise to Almighty GOD.

II. THAT it is a very becoming Instance of Christian Obedience, a laudable Imitation of our blessed Lord, and highly conducing to GOD's Glory, for us, in our several Capacities, to propagate that Revelation

to those who are yet Babes, and who have not yet been initiated, or not so fully as they ought, in the Mysteries of the Gospel.

III. AND this will easily lead me in the *Third* Place to apply the Substance of what shall be advanced under those Two Heads, to the Religious and Christian Undertaking that occasions this goodly Appearance of *Poor*, who *have the Gospel preached unto them*; and of *Babes*, to whom those Truths of Christianity are *reveal'd*, in so edifying a Manner, which, through their own Default, are *hid from the carnally wise and prudent*.

I. I shall endeavour to convince you, that the Revealing the Mysteries of Christianity to those who were destitute of all saving Knowledge, but were spiritually *Poor*, and *Babes* in Understanding, was both a proper Evidence of our Saviour's divine Mission, and a just Matter of Praise to Almighty GOD.

AMONG the many other Advantages that were to accrue to Mankind upon the Coming of the Messiah, among the distinguishing Marks and Characters that were given of him by the Prophets, it was foretold by *Isaiab xxix. 19. The Meek also shall encrease their Joy in the Lord, and the Poor among Men shall rejoice in the holy One of Israel.* And again, *lxi. 1. The Lord hath anointed me to proclaim glad Tidings to the Poor.* And the Royal Psalmist, when, in the 10th Verse of the *lxxviiith Psalm*, he had magnified GOD for having of *his Goodness prepared for the Poor*, proceeds to shew us in the following Verse, what sort of Preparation he had made for them, *viz. a Provision of spiritual Food and Nourishment proper for the Soul,*

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an Abundance of Doctrine and Plenty of the Word, in Opposition to that *Famine of the Word*, which is threaten'd in the Prophecy of *Amos*, as one of the greatest Curses that can befall a People. *The Lord gave the Word, great was the Company of Preachers, or them that publish'd it*, Psal. lxxviii. 11. And elsewhere, *Out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings hast thou ordained Strength*, Psal. viii. 2.

IN Allusion to which Predictions, our Saviour, in the Chapter of the Text, insists on his preaching the Gospel to the Poor, as one of the principal Marks by which he was to be known. For when *John the Baptist* had sent Two of his Disciples to enquire of him whether he were the CHRIST or not; *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* He return'd this short but significant Answer by them; *Go and tell John again those Things which you do see and hear; the Blind receive their Sight, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised up, and the Poor have the Gospel preached unto them.*

As much as to say, consider what you have either seen me do, or heard attested by credible Witnesses, compare my Actions with those ascrib'd by the Prophets to the Messiah, observe how exactly all Circumstances agree, and you will not need any Declaration of mine to certify you whether I am the CHRIST or not. And this indeed was the most proper and convincing Argument he could have us'd; for the bare averring such a Thing, without Proof; the pretending to a divine Mission, without shewing his Credentials, would have given little Satisfaction, and scarce have procur'd him many Profelytes.

BUT when he appeals to their own Senses, when he desires them but to make a true Report of those Things which they had seen and heard, and leaves them to judge of his Authority by his Actions, he took the most effectual Way to remove all Scruples, and to leave them without Excuse, if they did not believe in him. Those who would never have given him any Credit on his own Word and Asseveration, were much better convinced, when he bid them believe *for the very Work's sake*. When they beheld the maim'd and defective Organs of Sense and Motion, which were lost beyond the Help of Physick, or Recovery of Art, restor'd to their former Use, without any other Application than that of a few Words; when they beheld dead Bodies restor'd to Life, and dying Ones to Health; how the Poor and Calamitous of the Earth were invited to be Partakers of the gracious Terms of the Gospel Covenant; and those who had no Possessions on Earth, were taught to expect a Kingdom in Heaven: All which were such visible Tokens and Indications of the true Messiah; there was no opposing such powerful Conviction, notwithstanding the Force of such irresistible Evidence.

BUT it may possibly be objected, That the last of these Tokens, which is most to our present Purpose, had nothing miraculous in it, and was therefore a less distinguishing Note of his Divinity than any of the others. Men may be apt to imagine, that there needed no supernatural Aid or divine Impulse to enable him to execute the Office of a Preacher, to instruct the ignorant Multitude in the Rules of plain Morality, for which he might easily be qualified by a Readiness of Invention and Fluency of Speech, without a Com-
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mission from on High, and by less than a divine Power.

BUT yet if we respect the amazing Efficacy and Success of the Doctrine he deliver'd, and the Influence it had on the Lives of those that heard it; how convincingly he silenced the Gain-saying, how graciously he enlighten'd the Ignorant, how happily he reform'd the Vicious, with what admirable Dexterity he avoided the insidious Questions of the Captious and Ensnaring; if we consider how all who heard him, even when a Child, *were amaz'd at his Understanding and Answers*: How the Officers, who were sent to apprehend him, had not Power to execute their Commission, but with Astonishment confess'd, that *never Man spake like that Man*. If we consider the peculiar Worth and Excellence of those Rules which he enjoin'd, of what exceeding Benefit and Importance they are to Mankind, and how much they tend to the improving humane Nature, and raising it to the highest Degree of Perfection; it will sufficiently appear, that in the Discharge of this humble and condescending Office, he acted by as divine a Power, and gave as convincing Proofs of his heavenly Original, as in any of the others; that he was no less considerable in that Mount on which he preach'd, than in that on which he was transfigur'd; when he convers'd with Publicans and Sinners, than when he talk'd with *Moses* and *Elias*; when he familiarly styl'd himself the Son of Man, than when he was proclaim'd the *Son of GOD* from Heaven; when he converted those who were dead in their Sins, and rais'd in them a Newness of Life, than when, in a literal Sense, he rais'd from the Dead the departed *Lazarus*, and the Widow's Son.

EVEN the Obscurity and low Estate of those who first receiv'd the Publication, which by some of the Enemies of the Cross has been urg'd as an Argument against the Credit of the Publisher, does, on the contrary, more undeniably establish and confirm it. Thus it behoved CHRIST to converse, such *lost Sheep* was he to *seek and save*, such *Sinners* did he *come to call to Repentance*, to reduce such Wanderers into the Way, to be a *Light* to those who thus *sat in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death, and to guide their Feet into the Way of Peace.*

HAD he taken any other Measures in Propagating his Religion; had he applied himself to the great and leading Men of the Age and Nation where he liv'd; had he courted the Powers that were then in Being, to countenance his Design; had he sought to establish it by the Help of a Confederate and united Faction, and the powerful Influence of a prevailing Party, (which humane Prudence would have suggested to him, as the most likely Methods of succeeding, if he had not been conscious that it was able to make its Way by the Force of its own native Conviction, tho' in the Hands of the weakest Instruments) he would not have corresponded so exactly with the Description of the Messiah by the Prophets, and we should have wanted one powerful Argument for the Truth of Christianity.

AND as his proceeding in this Manner was a proper Evidence of his being sent from Heaven, so was it likewise a just Matter of Praise to Almighty GOD. The faithful Execution of his Will, and Accomplishment of his Purposes by such Methods, and under such Regulations as he has thought fit to prescribe, is always highly acceptable and well-pleasing to him, and
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was never more acceptable than in the several Steps that were taken by the Redeemer of Mankind, toward the effecting that Redemption. If at the first Formation of the World he survey'd the several Parts of his Workmanship, and with Pleasure pronounc'd, *that they were good*, i. e. conformable to the Model in his eternal Mind, and adorn'd with such Kinds and Degrees of Perfection, as he had allotted to the several Species that compos'd it; with how much greater Satisfaction did he survey the new Creation, the Renovation of fall'n Man, his Regeneration *by Water and the Holy Ghost*, the sanctifying and cleansing him, making in him *a new Heart and a new Spirit*, instructed in the Knowledge of God's Will, enclin'd to the Observance of it, and set right in the Way that leads to Eternal Life!

SUCH a glorious and happy Change he resolv'd to make, and to effect it by the Mediation of his ever-blessed Son: And that Son, who was all Obedience, whose Meat and Drink it was to perform his Father's Will, and to cause it to be perform'd by others, undertook the gracious Work, and not only executed the main Substance of his Commission, but complied with it in the Manner and all the Circumstances. And particularly with Regard to the Persons to whom the Truths of the Gospel were first to be declar'd, who were first to be *begotten again into a lively Hope*; to be *renewed in their inward Man, and in the Spirit of their Mind*: He applied himself as directed, not to the Great and Powerful, not to the Wise and Learned, but to those of low Condition and ordinary Capacities; that when the Cause should appear to thrive so well, and spread so far under the Management of such weak

and despicable Agents; the Power by which they acted, and the Truths which they proclaim'd, might be confess'd to be of GOD, and not of Man, that all Men might ascribe the Glory to him, who *destroyeth the Wisdom of the Wise, and bringeth to nothing the Understanding of the Prudent*, 1 Cor. i. 19. and for that Reason hath not called many wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble; but hath chosen the foolish Things of the World to confound the Wise, and the weak Things of the World to confound the Things that are Mighty, Ver. 26, 27.

IT was his pleasing Reflexion on the Display of GOD's Glory in accomplishing his Designs by the most unlikely Means, that vented it self in those Expressions of Joy we meet with in my Text; *I thank Thee, O Father*, &c.

THE proper Matter of his rejoicing was not, we may be sure, the Concealment of the Gospel Truths from any Body. He who was *the true Light that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, Joh. i. 19. *Who would have all to be sav'd, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, 1 Tim. ii. 4. could not be delighted with any one's Continuance in Error. The Rich and Knowing were to have their Share of the Revelation likewise, but the Poor and Ignorant were the Channel through which it was to be convey'd to them. This happy Order and Oeconomy of dispensing the Gospel: This raising the Poor out of the Mire, and setting him above the Princes of the People; this filling the Hungry with good Things, and sending the Rich empty away, till those being first replenish'd, should invite them to partake of their spiritual Sustenance: This, I say, was the direct Ground of his Exultation,

not that these Things were *totally* hid from the Wise and Prudent, but that they were *so long* hid till after they had been revealed to Babes. I am now to shew in the

II. *Second* Place, that it is a very becoming Instance of Christian Obedience, a laudable Imitation of our blessed Lord, and highly conducing to GOD's Glory, for us, in our several Capacities, to propagate that Revelation to those who are still Babes, and who have not yet been initiated, or not so fully as they ought, in the Mysteries of the Gospel.

THE great Author of our Religion having imparted to his Church such saving and useful Truths, as were sufficient to direct us in the Way to Happiness, and appointed a Succession of Pastors and Teachers, with an Authority derivable to others throughout all Ages, to preserve the Knowledge of those sacred Truths, to spread and diffuse them through all Nations, and publish to the whole World the glad Tidings of Peace and Salvation; to declare that Method of Reconciliation to GOD, and of attaining eternal Life, which he had declar'd to them; having done thus much, I say, and finish'd the Work he had to do on Earth, he was taken from them into Heaven, but left them with this Promise, that he would still be spiritually present with them *to the End of the World*; that he would send them *another Comforter*, that should *lead them into all Truth*, and enable them to lead others, and with an express Charge, that they should make it their Endeavour so to do.

THUS did our blessed Redeemer lay the Foundation of an universal Church, with sufficient Encouragement
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to the whole Race of Mankind to shelter themselves within its Pale, and become Converts to Christianity, and with a Command to those who are already admitted, who have been *enlightned, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and the good Word of GOD, and the Powers of the World to come*, Heb. vi. 4, 5. with a Command, I say to them, to be zealous in imparting that Light to others, which has been so freely communicated to them; to demonstrate the Sincerity of that Love of GOD and their Neighbour, which, if they are true Members of the Christian Church, must necessarily possess their Hearts, by shewing a tender Regard for the Souls of Men; by revealing those Treasures of hidden Wisdom, of which they have been hitherto unhappily depriv'd; by labouring with all Diligence and Care, with all Humility and Condescension, with all Earnestness and Affection, to rectify their Mistakes, to remove their Prejudices, and give them as clear an Understanding as may be of the Things that belong to their Happiness and Salvation.

IF all who have profess'd the Name of CHRIST, had been acted by such a Spirit as this; if every one would have applied to himself that Exhortation of our Saviour to St. Peter, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren*: Had every one made it a Matter of Conscience, not barely to be a Christian himself, but to contribute in the best Manner he was able to the making others so; if such a Spirit as this, I say, had all along prevail'd among the Members of the Church, the dark Corners of the Earth might long since have been illuminated, Christendom might have had the same Bounds with the habitable Globe; not only the Sound of the Gospel might have been heard, but its Doctrines

receiv'd in all Lands, and all the Ends of the World might have seen and enjoy'd the Salvation of our G O D.

BUT how backward soever the Generality of Believers may have been in this Respect, or how short soever they may have fallen of what might justly be expected from them, this makes nothing at all against the Rule, their Duty lies plain before them, they are expressly commanded to *follow after the Things wherewith one may edify another; to consider one another, to provoke unto Love and to good Works; not to seek their own Profit, but the Profit of many, that they may be saved; to have Compassion on their Brethren, and save them, plucking them [as Firebrands] out of the Fire.*

FROM such imminent Danger we have all been preserved our selves; thus mercifully has our gracious Redeemer deliver'd us from the Brinks of Ruine, released us from the most galling Yoke and slavish Bondage, and brought us from the Power of Satan unto G O D. And can we refuse to copy him in those good Works, so far as our Capacity extends, of which we our selves have been the happy Objects? Shall we, on whom the Light of the Gospel has shone in so glorious a Manner, eclipse and contract the Beams of it, and not suffer them to dart into those obscure Regions, where the *Prince of this World* still rules with a despotick Sway, blinding his Vassals with the grossest Superstitions, and corrupting them with the foulest Immoralities? Do we think our own Happiness would be the less, if we should contribute to the Encrease of theirs? Are we jealous of Rivals in G O D's Favour, or apprehensive that the Kingdom of Heaven would not be large enough to receive

receive us, if too many should be saved? Would we shelter our own Indevotion, and Profaneness, and Neglect of Duty, under the greater Enormities of those unenlightened Wretches; and imagine we shall be reputed less culpable for being *bad Christians*, because there are some who are *meer Heathens*? Or is it nothing else but a supine Negligence and lazy Inadvertence; a Contempt of those miserable People who are destitute of Christian Knowledge, and not thinking them worth our Notice, that makes the glorious Design of communicating the Gospel to them go on so heavily, and meet with so small an Encouragement? Alas! how different a Notion have we of the Value of Souls from that of our blessed Lord; or what must have become of us, if he had set as low a Price on ours, as we on theirs? How justly may he reproach us for such uncharitable Neglect, as the Master in the Parable did the unmerciful Servant; *Shouldest not thou also have had Compassion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had Pity on thee?* How ill do we follow the Direction he has given us a little after my Text: *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart?* How unjustly do we *bide our Light under a Bushel*, and *take away that Key of Knowledge*, that should unlock the Mysteries of the Gospel to those from whom they are as yet hidden! How little do we consult the Glory of God, which ought to be the chief End of all our Actions, by deferring to make known the Wonders of his Providence, and his infinite Love to Man, in so graciously contriving the Means of his Restoration to Grace and Favour; where it must, and will be one Day made manifest, whether we will be the Instruments of it, or no: as if we were possess'd with a more than *Jewish* Selfishness, and resolv'd to confine
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that Redemption to our selves, which he intended for the universal Benefit of Mankind!

I am making these Expostulations among those, who, I know, are sensible of the Justness of them, and who have long been labouring to prevent the unhappy Occasion that has been given for them, and not without a good Degree of Success; but the Concurrence of all Hands and Hearts is requisite toward the accomplishing a Work of so large a Compass, and the Want of that is what I sincerely lament; but I am willing to believe, that *Her Majesty's* Gracious Letter, requiring a Collection to be made for the carrying on that godly Undertaking, and appointed to be read in all our Churches the next Lord's-Day, will very much encrease the Number of those who make the Propagating of Christian Knowledge their peculiar Care, and that the Exhortations to that Purpose will have a good Effect; and therefore I will not too far anticipate the Subject.

I have a Charity of a nearer and more immediate Concern at present to recommend to you, if any farther Recommendation be requisite of those, whose innocent Look, whose modest Garb, whose unaffected Plainness, whose orderly Procession, whose towardly Manners and regular Behaviour, whose ready Submission to Discipline, and happy Improvement under it, do so engagingly plead for them, and carry such a winning Perswasion.

III. For this was the *Third* Thing I proposed, viz. to apply the Substance of what has been advanc'd under the Two former Heads, to the Religious and Christian Undertaking, that occasions this goodly Appearance of Poor, who *have the Gospel preach'd unto them*; and of *Babes*, to whom those Truths

of Christianity are *reveal'd*, which are *hid from the* worldly wise.

AND sure if the revealing the Mysteries of the Gospel to those, who, in any Sense, were Babes, was at first a Demonstration of the *Truth* of Christianity; the Revealing it now with such Success, to these who are literally so, is a Demonstration of the *Power* of it. Such a well-laid Foundation in the Principles of the Christian Faith, so forward a Proficiency in Children of such tender Years; such a *Readiness to give an Answer to every Man that asketh them a Reason of the Hope that is in them*, is no inconsiderable Proof that GOD is with us of a Truth, and that *such as are meek and tractable among us, them will he teach his Way*.

IF the bringing his Purposes to pass by the most helpless Agents and weakest Instruments, be conducive to GOD's Glory, and an Argument of his providential Care and Direction of humane Affairs; what Agents so helpless as these? what Instruments so weak? and yet, what *Strength has he ordained?* What *Praise has he perfected out of the Mouth of these Babes?* What an Air of primitive Simplicity do we see reviving? How blessed a Resemblance of the Beginnings of the Gospel-Age, in the several Parts of Her Majesty's Dominions? How laudable a Correspondence has been settled and maintained among the distant Promoters of this good Work, who carry on a religious Commerce, and negotiate for the Good of Souls? How pleasant is it to observe, that from the Time it was first undertaken, it has never intermitted or stood still, never cool'd upon their Hands, much less has it gone backward; but, as it appears, upon comparing every Year's Account, with that of the foregoing, the Number of Schools and
Scholars,

Scholars, and the Contributions for maintaining them, have been still growing and encreasing, and the Lord has been continually *adding to the Church such as, we trust, shall be sav'd?* Thus is that *Grain of Mustard Seed*, which was *cast into the Ground, become a great Tree*, and that Tree is in a fair Probability of spreading to a Grove.

AND I will not distrust, but that the delightful Spectacle of this Day, the humble Procession, the decent Appearance, the reverent Deportment, and the harmonious Consort of those Innocents now before you, far more affecting than the Solemnities of the gayest Triumph, or the fictitious Passions of a Theatrical Representation; I will not distrust, I say, but that so many perswasive Arguments, and (if that could add any Weight to a Rhetorick so much more cogent) the earnest Endeavour of the Advocate who is now pleading in their Behalf, will, with GOD's Blessing, touch the Heart of some new Benefactor, and open some fresh Spring of Bounty to water and refresh these godly Nurseries, which give us so fair a Specimen of the Reformation of Manners in this Age, and I hope in GOD, will compleat and perfect it in the next at least.

WHEN we observe the surprizing Proficiency of these Children in the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty, to a Degree that could scarce have been believ'd, till it was thus try'd; how few in so large a Number have prov'd remarkably vicious and incorrigible: How few have wanted either a Capacity to retain even long Catechetical Answers with the Scripture-Proofs, or a decent Courage to pronounce them audibly and distinctly in a full Congregation, not even those of the Female Sex: This will convince us, how much the
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Soul of Man may be improv'd by good Nurture and Education; and that it is not any Inability or Defect of Nature, (which too often bears the Blame) but Negligence and Sloth, or a wrong Method of Instruction, that makes the Generality of other Children appear with less Advantage.

BLESSED be GOD! we have many excellent Seminaries of Religion and Learning, where the Children of the better Sort may be well grounded in all useful Knowledge; in all that can adorn this Life, or fit them for a better.

BUT without Disparagement or Injustice to those hopeful Nurseries, I may venture to affirm, that there is no Way of Instruction so generally successful, where there are so few Miscarriages, or so compleatly fram'd for the breeding up good Christians, as in these CHARITY-SCHOOLS.

THUS amply has the wise Providence of GOD, compensated the Disadvantages of the Poor and Indigent, in wanting many of the Conveniencies of this Life, by a more abundant Provision for their Happiness in the next. Had they been higher born, or more richly endow'd, they would have wanted this Manner of Education, of which those only enjoy the Benefit, who are low enough to submit to it, where they have such Advantages *without Money and without Price*, as the Rich cannot purchase with it; the Learning which is *given*, is generally more edifying to them, than that which is *sold* to others: Thus do they become more exalted in Goodness, by being depress'd in Fortune, and their Poverty is, in Reality, their Preferment.

LET us thankfully adore the divine Goodness, that in the midst of an Age, which seem'd abandon'd to
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Vice and Irreligion, abounding with so much Corruption, with so many Examples of Profaneness and Debauchery, has raised up such a Spirit of Piety and Charity, and put it into the Hearts of many worthy Persons, to combine together for all good Purposes, to form themselves into Societies, to join their united Endeavours, and contribute largely out of the Substance wherewith He had blessed them, toward the extirpating of Vice and Ignorance, giving a new Turn to the State of Christianity, supporting and propagating that Religion, of which profane Scoffers and Atheistical Cabals were plotting the Subversion.

THAT he has endu'd them with Constancy and Resolution to persevere in so good a Work, and *not to be weary of well-doing*; and enclin'd them to think no Labour too great, no Office too mean, that may be serviceable to the Christian Cause; that Persons of good Birth and liberal Fortunes, should submit to be the Overseers of those Poor, who are maintain'd by their own Charity; that they should make it their Business to look into their little Wants, and become, as it were, their Stewards and Servants, in Imitation of that lowly and condescending Act of our blessed Saviour, when *he wash'd the Feet of his own Disciples*, or when he told them, *I am among you as he that serveth*.

THE many excellent Benefits that arise from this well-plac'd Charity, to the Children themselves, to Families, to Parishes, to the Church and Nation, have been often set forth with great Advantage on former Occasions of this Nature; many of which, though at first they were but *pious Presages*, have been since made good by undeniable Experience, as I doubt not but all the rest, which there has not yet been Time enough

to make manifest, will appear to be upon farther Trial.

It has been the peculiar Happiness of this Charity, that there have been no Complaints of any Misapplication of the Funds that are destin'd to this pious Use, which are too often alledg'd against others of a publick Nature: No colourable Objection of any Kind has been made against it, nor indeed can it meet with Opposition from any, but those who are unwilling that the Empire of the Devil should be weaken'd, that Vice and Immorality should lose any Ground, and who are the declar'd Enemies of God and Goodness.

BUT however, the *God of this World* has blinded the Children of Disobedience, that they *will not see, nor understand, and be converted*; but despising the Treasures of God's Word, and the Light of his Holy Gospel, put their Trust in *worldly Riches*, and value themselves upon their *carnal Policy*; *We thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that the Things which are thus bidden, thro' their own Default, from the wise and prudent, (as the World accounts Prudence) thou hast revealed unto these Babes.* For which, and all other thy Mercies;

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the Praise, &c.





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *S E P U L C H R E*,

J U N E 12. 1712.

Being T H U R S D A Y in W H I T S O N - W E E K,

By *GEORGE* Lord *WILLOUGHBY de BROKE*, D. D.

A C T S XX. 35.

— *And to remember the Words of the Lord
JESUS, how he said, It is more Blessed to
give than to receive.*

THESE Words are the Conclusion of a
very affectionate and long Discourse, which
St. Paul continued even till Midnight, at
Miletus, whither a very great Concourse
of devout Christians, from all Parts of *Asia*, came to
attend him upon his Summons, and then took their

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final Leave of him, and received his Counsel, and last Benediction. Wherein, after he had solemnly purg'd himself, by a solemn Appeal to GOD and to their Consciences, in that he had *declared the whole Will of GOD* to them, and was therefore *clear of the Blood of any*, that should unhappily miscarry; and had moreover recommended them *to GOD, and the Word of his Grace*; that he might leave the Sum of all his Preaching the warmer upon their Hearts, he concludes with this earnest Exhortation, that they would ever *remember the Words of our Lord JESUS, how he said, It is more Blessed to give than to receive.*

AND what Words could I have pitch'd on, that might sink so deep into your Hearts, or that can be so justly adapted to your present pious Dispositions, as these? If you will reflect withal, that our Lord did once vouchsafe to be under the very Circumstances of these little ones now before us; and was an innocent, meek, teachable, industrious, and humble Child himself; born of Parents as mean, as destitute as these Children are; but possibly more Industrious, certainly more Holy than theirs: Educated by them every Way as hardly; subject to them in all things; and exercised under them, from the Beginning, in that very Way of Piety and universal Goodness, to which these Children, by your religious and watchful Care, are devoted; and from which He never, in the least Semblance of a single Instance, once departed.

LET me therefore charge this upon your tender Souls, dear Children, and conjure you to Write it in your Hearts; that our Lord JESUS was once as one of you: And that you continually beg of him to give you his Grace, so to improve in all the Virtues of the
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Christian Life, as to grow daily more and more like unto him, in every Station of your Lives.

A N D for our Encouragement in this good Work, we may presume to believe, that our Lord, at their Years, would have been better pleased to have been one of such an holy Meeting, in such an holy Place, upon such an holy Occasion as this; than he was at his Sitting in the midst of the Doctors. And therefore, whoever shall commiserate the Circumstances of these poor Children before us, or be any Ways assisting to their Education, will doubtless feel an unspeakable Comfort springing up in his own Soul, from this well-grounded Hope, that what he doth to the least of these little ones, our Blessed Lord will graciously accept as done in very Deed unto himself.

A N D as our Lord gradually improv'd in Stature and Wisdom; it pleased the divine Providence purposely to choose such Circumstances of Life for him, as would best accord with, would best express this sacred Maxim and Principle of his Heart: For of all Men that ever were, or shall be born; He least affected, least desired to receive, and had the most exquisite Taste and Relish of Giving, and of doing Good.

So that we may not without some Grounds of Probability infer from these Words, not being so much as once recorded in any of the Gospels, that they were the familiar Saying of our Saviour; which could never be in Danger of being lost, so long as any Memory of him should be preserved; and are therefore very justly styled by the Apostle, peculiarly the *Words of our Lord JESUS*; and may be received by us as the Christian Devise or Motto; which with all possibly Propriety might have been engraven upon his Cross, whereon he

freely gave all that humane Nature hath to give, or can ever want; he gave his blessed Self a Ransom for the World: However they ought to be writ in the Heart of every Christian, as an Eternal Memorial of these Three great Points; which I shall make the Heads of my Discourse.

THE First Point is, That these Words represent the Character of our Lord.

THE Second, That they express the Genius of his Religion.

THE Third, That they declare to us, wherein the peculiar Blessedness of the Christian Life does consist. And,

First, From these Words, being so familiar with our Lord, we may presume they were intended to represent the Character of his very Soul; how he was devoted to all the Offices of Humanity and good Nature.

THE two general Habits which filled and employed the whole Intensity of his Soul, were unaffected Piety towards GOD, and Charity to Mankind; and that these two sacred Duties might never, or very rarely, interfere; he chose the Solitude of the Night for his usual Devotions, that no Opportunity of doing Good might slip by him unobserv'd, or unimprov'd; but yet, if they did providentially interfere, he preferred Mercy to Men, before Sacrifice to GOD.

HE had not any one Affection in the blessed Frame of his Mind, but what was divinely exercised in constant Acts of Beneficence; for he scarce so much as ever indulged himself in any one innocent Pleasure of humane Life, but the going about continually to do Good, the very Blessedness of my Text; which was Meat and
Drink

Drink indeed to him ; who knew no other Desires but to fulfil all Righteousness, by doing the Works of miraculous Goodness, which never Man did ; healing the Souls and Bodies of Men tormented by the Devil, and exhibiting himself, upon all Occasions, a familiar Example of that divine Life of Piety and Charity, of which Man is capable through his Grace, and by an humble Imitation of him.

AND here, be pleased to observe, that our Lord chose not the Charity of Alms-giving for his Province ; how blessed a Part soever that be : For Gold and Silver he had none ; neither his Kingdom, nor any part of his Treasure, were of this World : Neither had he the like Obligations with us, to lay a good Foundation against the Time to come, by transferring hereby the perishing Interest of present Things into Heaven, where he was Lord and Heir of all Things ; this indeed is our Duty, because Liberality in giving is as absolutely requisite to the future Happiness of the rich Giver, as it is necessary to the present Subsistence of the poor Receiver.

THIS Part therefore he left for those principally, whom he intended to honour with the sacred Trust of being the immediate Stewards of his Providence ; to whose Commiseration and Care he should commit the indigent Creatures of his Family ; that by a compassionate Heart, and a liberal Hand, and a discreet Distribution, they might be in the Place of GOD himself, doing Good continually, receiving the Petitions and the Blessings of those that are ready to perish, and thereby becoming perfect in all the Offices of Mercy and Goodness.

THIS Part of Liberality, I say, our Lord exercised not: But his divine Compassion was intent upon a Charity much more exalted than this; the relieving the Souls of Men, and providing for their eternal Welfare; a Charity in Kind and in Design, which this of yours resembles. For though your Liberality hath greatly abounded, yet the chief Scope of this *your Labour of Love*, is the Christian Education of these poor Children; that they may be early seasoned with the Principles of pure and undefiled Religion, and may become Examples of Virtue and Piety, in those Families where they shall be received, and may do some Good in their Generations, and continue for ever living Members of the Kingdom of GOD. This is a Charity wherein you truly co-operate with our Blessed Lord, the Lover of Souls, and Saviour of Mankind: Because it extends farther than to the short Subsistence and Accommodation of this transient State; and applies it self to the making seasonable Provisions for Eternity. A Charity therefore, whose blessed Effects shall never fail: So that there shall not be one Object of this your present Beneficence, whose happy Education, under your pious Care, shall set him right in the Ways of GOD; but who (if he persists therein) shall every Moment of a blessed Eternity have reason to thank GOD and you, for that Happiness, the Foundation whereof was laid in this your Charity.

AND this I mention for the Honour of this particular kind of Charity, above all others, and for your great Encouragement in it; that it is the very Part our Lord chose, wherein to display the utmost beneficial Extent, and Perfection of Goodness. For what other
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is your most Christian Aim in this, but the very same with that of our Blessed Saviour's; the Glory of GOD, the Inlargement of his Kingdom, and the eternal Happiness of these little ones that are now before us: These are indeed an astonishing Number, very near Five Thousand; so wonderfully hath this your Charity, through the Mercies of GOD, grown and prevailed! And of such happy Influence hath your Example been, that I trust (if our political Discords do not withhold the Mercy of GOD from prospering this good Work, as he hath hitherto done) many of us shall live to see Orphans bred up in this publick Manner exceed, in the several Parts of this Kingdom, the Number of those that were sealed in the several Tribes of *Israel*.

THE present Appearance of so many clean, decent, modest Children; their reverent Behaviour in the House of GOD; their exact Conformity to the Orders and Ceremonies of our Church; is, I verily assure my self, the goodliest Sight the whole World can boast of in any kind: Is a Sight, I presume to say, which their holy Angels, who always stand before the Face of GOD, do now peculiarly rejoice in. If then we might be permitted to glory, we would glory in this Appearance. But the ostentatious Part of this, farther than as it may *provoke unto Love, and unto good Works*, you, with a truly Christian Humility, avoid: For though the World may read so large a Catalogue of these happy Objects of your wise and religious Care; yet the Names of you, their chief Patrons and Benefactors, are no where to be found, but *in the Book of Life*: There is the punctual Record of this your Charity; and thence shall be adjudged your full Reward.

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I proceed to the *Second Observation from these Words of our Lord*; that they express the *Genius of his Religion*; the natural Tendency whereof is, to smooth and soften our harsh and unrelenting Tempers, that thereby we might be perfectly disposed and furnished unto every good Work.

INFINITE Goodness, the very substantial Goodness of the Godhead, was intimately united to the Soul of our Saviour: And therefore is this Principle of Beneficence and universal Good-will, the proper Spirit of his holy Religion; and should be the Temper and Character of all his Followers.

BUT so subtle hath been the Enemy of Mankind, that, in many Parts of the Christian World abroad, he hath greatly abused the tender Affections of Persons, zealously bent upon doing Good in a more than ordinary Degree; and hath thereby betrayed them into many hurtful and foolish Superstitions. But, blessed be GOD, instead of Monastick Foundations, he hath raised up amongst us, every where, Nurseries of pious and useful Education, where our Youth are instructed in every good Work that can be profitable for Men.

TO this truly Christian Spirit, so abundantly shed abroad in all your Hearts, it is to be ascribed, that these Children stand before us, separated, I hope, from the Pollutions of the World; but by no Means from the Employments of it: For by your religious Care, and the joint Liberality of others, they are placed out to the several Occupations that are most suitable to their Capacities and Strength; but the good Foundation is first laid; they are first *brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; are nourished and sustained
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with the sincere Milk of the Word; that they may grow thereby to be capable of receiving the Bread of Eternal Life: So that they are never recommended to any Family, till you have had good Experience of them, that they are well seasoned with Piety, Industry, and good Manners; whereby, I hope, it is generally found, that the Blessing of GOD goes along with them, as it did with holy *Joseph*, that *whatever they do, the Lord maketh it to Prosper*. And reflect, I beseech you, for your own Comfort, if there be Joy in the Presence of GOD over one Sinner that repenteth; what may justly be your humble Hope, in that such Multitudes (who otherways would, most probably, have been exposed to Idleness and a dissolute Life) are, by your provident Piety, under so hopeful a Prevention of ever being grievous Sinners, or needing deep Repentance?

BUT then, let every one consider, how aggravating his Guilt will be that shall any Ways offend one of the least of these little ones; seducing him from the Ways of GOD and Virtue, into the Paths of Sin and Perdition. Whoever of these shall thus miscarry; You and the Publick shall stand discharged: His Punishment shall be upon his own Head, and his Accomplices: Because, if any Charity shall ever be so graciously accepted for true Righteousness, as to cover a Multitude of Sins, either of the charitable Person himself, or of the Community to which he belongs, from being rigorously accounted for; I should indulge my Hopes from this Charity, above all other; because there seems some Glimpse of equitable Congruity, that that Charity should cover the most Sins in our selves, which is intended to prevent, as far as possible, the Sins of others.

AND,

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AND, for this good End, the publick Provisions and Incouragements for Religion and Virtue; the Laws against Immorality and Prophaneness, never were in any Age, or in any Country, wiser or better, than in our own. And I cannot but in Gratitude to the Administration think, that these our good Laws, so often inforc'd by repeated Admonitions from the Throne, have had their good Effect: And permit me to observe it to the Glory of GOD first, and next, under these Encouragements and Assistances, to the highly deserved Commendation of the Parochial Clergy amongst us; that through their assiduous Labours, their sound and affectionate Preaching, and their good Example in all Things; never were our Churches so well filled; never our Communion so frequented; never more holy Zeal, more humble Devotion; never larger Charities, than what are constantly offered up at the Holy Table in every Church of this great City.

BUT that which hath principally given Life to our Laws, Vigour to the Ministers of GOD, and Efficacy to every Example; that which powerfully recommendeth our National Interest to the Divine Providence, is the eminent Piety and Charity of our supream Governour, whom GOD hath set upon the Throne of these Nations: Who, from the Years of the least of these little ones, hath remembered her Creator; and, ever since, hath endeavoured to adorn her Soul with all divine Graces, suitable as well to the immediate Ministers of GOD, as to the humblest of all his Servants; who, I believe, hath, for that End, never omitted to worship GOD, Morning and Evening in Private: And I never heard, though I have been honoured with her Service ever since her happy Accession to the Throne, that
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She ever once wholly omitted the publick Offices of our Liturgy: She lifts up holy Hands, Day by Day, for a Blessing on the publick Councils and Administration; that every Thing may work together for the greater Good of all her Subjects, and the Peace of the World. And, that the Desires of her Soul might be more prevalent with GOD, her Devotions ascend not to Heaven empty; for her Royal Charity ever accompanies her Devotion; this is the holy Incense with which her Prayers are constantly offered up to GOD, for His Blessing on her Government; and therefore She *deviseeth liberal Things*. The Refugees of all Nations feel her Charity, and are nourished from her Hands; how much more then, her own born Subjects, who are the very natural Members of her political Person, and are therefore every one of them as her Child?

HERE then is our Comfort; and let this be my Apology, that I have mentioned these Things, which are better known than I can possibly describe them; that if this good Work before us should ever be in Distress; we have a never-failing Resource, sealed to us in the very Elements of her Royal Heart, that no publick Work, which tends so directly to the Honour of GOD, so immediately to the Relief of the Poor, so diffusively to the common Benefit of all her People, can ever want her utmost Incouragement and Assistance.

AND it hath been a constant good Omen with me, that GOD would entertain Thoughts of Mercy towards this Nation, and in his own good Time give us the Establishment of Peace; in that He hath raised up this Spirit of Charity, which hath gradually extended its *Influence*, as the Burden of the War hath
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increased : And this hath been our Wisdom ; that our Prayers and Alms have contended before GOD with as true a Zeal, as our valiant Country-Men have fought. And though they have been always Conquerors, yet I am sure they will forgive me in saying, that the happy Issue of all their Victories is due to that Blessing, which the publick Charity and Piety have, at last, obtained from the great Arbitrator of the World ; whose sole Prerogative it is, to *weigh, and ballance the Nations ; and to determine the Bounds of their Habitations.*

AND therefore give me Leave farther to observe, and I do it with a joyful Heart, as a just Incouragement to you, to abound more and more in this good Work ; That this your most Christian Charity, and all other your publick Alms, joined with those of our Royal Intercessor, are at last *come before GOD for a Memorial for us ;* for he hath, at length, been graciously pleased to hear and pity our Groans and Oppressions, under the Calamities of this long and wasting War ; and will, I hope, say effectually to the Sword, *Destroy no farther :* And, for this great and good End, he hath been pleased to single out the comprehensive Wisdom, Equanimity, and Justice of our QUEEN, *whom he delights to Honour,* to compass and settle the Terms of Peace.

LET it therefore be the Glory of Her Reign, that She loves Peace more than Conquest ; . and that our Ease and Prosperity are nearer her Heart, than any other Interest whatsoever. And, next to Her, let us wish all manner of Felicity to those, who with so much Wisdom, Fidelity, * Courage, and Zeal, have served their Country under Her Directions, in this great
Work :

Work : And notwithstanding all the unnatural Difficulties, which have been cast in their Way, have yet wrought out for us such a Deliverance, and such a Peace as this, which I hope we are just entring upon : A Peace, wherein our Government shall be respected Abroad, our Trade greatly extended, and our Holy Religion farther secured to us in the Protestant Succession in the *Illustrious House of Hanover* !

WHAT remains to Crown the whole, is our Part alone ; which is, to endeavour humbly to deserve of GOD, that this may be a lasting Peace, and a lasting Blessing to us, and to our Posterity.

AND let no Man living, no not all the united Wisdom of the whole Earth, assume presumptuously a Capacity to foresee and determine what Peace shall, in Fact, be lasting ; this depends entirely upon Providence, and is in the Hand of GOD alone : So that there are no certain Terms, nor infallible Security devisable for this ; but a general Progress in that Righteousness, whereby, alone, Nations are Established.

AND therefore, my worthy Friends, (to apply this to the Purpose for which I intended it) as this your pious Work hath, I very believe, had no small Share in disposing the Divine Mercy to bless, at last, the publick Councils with so happy an Issue ; let me beseech you, in Gratitude to GOD, and true Zeal for our common Interest, to persevere more and more in doing Good.

THAT this your Charity, which hath been so seasonable a Relief against the Poverty, which this War hath unavoidably occasioned, may be as effectually a Provision against that Immorality and Prophaneness, which

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which the Prosperity of Peace will be apt to tempt us to; may it be diffused farther and farther, and continue to bless our Country!

I proceed to the *Third and last Observation from the Words of the Text: That they declare to us wherein the peculiar Blessedness of the Christian Life doth consist*; which is best promoted by Giving, and by doing Good.

FOR Charity is not a solitary Virtue, a single Blessing; but the happy Conspiracy of all those soft and tender Passions, from whence Humanity, that is, the most perfect State of Humane Nature, takes its Name: Nay, all that we know of GOD, whereby he is in himself *the Blessed for evermore*, and to us, the great Object of our Love and Adoration, is, that he is absolutely perfect in all the infinite Varieties of Goodness, wherein the several Infirmities, and Wants, and Sins of all his Creatures take their Sanctuary and their Refuge.

VARIOUS have been the Graces, the Communications, and Honours, which GOD, at sundry Times, upon infinite Occasions, in several Persons, hath vouchsafed to Mankind; but none in the general hath been comparable to that all-wise indulgent Oeconomy of his Providence, whereby he has commissioned and intrusted every one in his Sphere to be assisting and helpful to each other: That all Mankind might taste the Blessedness of my Text: That you, and I, and all of us, indigent Creatures every one of us, should yet be honoured to be the Stewards of his Providence to one another; should be, not only as it were good Angels, ministring to the Patron and Father of
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Mankind; but (I speak it with all imaginable Reverence) should be even as Gods on Earth, receiving the Prayers, and relieving the Wants of those, who do not disdain to prostrate themselves at our Feet. Who can reflect on the Honour and Felicity of this State, and not beg of GOD to give him an humble, and a thankful Heart, that he may discharge this sacred Commission with Approbation to his Master, Comfort to his own Soul, and to the Good of all about him.

REFLECT, I beseech you, on all the various Scenes of Life, which busy and imploy the Sons of Men: What Part can we act upon this great Theatre so Delightful, so Honourable, and so nearly allied to GOD, as that of a Patron and Friend of Mankind?

BUT how blessed it is to give, how much of the Life of GOD there is in it, you, I hope, and all other religious Persons, who are exercised in these Virtues, feel at present; and may we all daily feel, more and more, to a blessed Eternity, infinitely beyond what our Hearts can now conceive, or Words express!

I should have been more particular in the Illustration and Inforcement of this Duty, from several Heads of Discourse, which might have been very proper, and very necessary in any other Audience, and upon any other Occasion but this: Which might have been drawn either from those internal Dispositions of Soul, from whence this Christian Virtue, under the Grace of GOD, doth arise; or from the Habit or actual Exercise by which it is expressed; or from the Conscience and Memory of it, by which

it is tasted and enjoyed ; or from the natural Fruits which spring from it in this Life, by which it is adorned, nourished and sustained ; or from those supernatural Blessings, which, by the Divine Benediction, are promised to it, and shall infallibly reward it hereafter : These Topicks I should, I say, have insisted largely on any where but here, on any Occasion but this ; for what Oratory can affect the Hearts of Men like the Appearance of these blessed little Ones before us ? who, as it were, irresistibly beget the same Affections in every one that seeth them, which the tender Parent hath for his own Child : What Words therefore can be wanting to excite, or can indeed come up to such devout Passions ?

AND moreover, the holy Zeal for Charity, which every where appears in this Great City, made me think, and I believe very justly, that there would be no Occasion, that it could scarce be decent, to press the Generosity and Growth of your Charity, particularly in this highly commendable Instance before us, either by any Amplifications of the Duty it self, or by any Views of the Rewards of it.

AND besides, I am verily persuaded, that every one of you here present, and all others, who are united with you, and are any Ways assisting to you in this holy League of Charity, are already, or shall be hereafter, visible Instances of the Blessing of the Divine Providence.

AND may the Divine Mercy return the Blessing of this Charity to you in Kind ! That for your Feeding, your Cloathing, your Educating these helpless little ones, he would continually bless all you, who
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are now, or who shall at any Time hereafter be Parents of Children, that they may take good Courses, may grow up in the Fear and Service of GOD, may never be destitute of true and faithful Friends, may every Way be lasting Comforts to you, and happy Heirs with you of Eternal Life! And solace your Hearts by Faith, that our Lord, who imbraced and laid his Hands on, and blessed those little Children that were brought unto him, will doubtless accept this Charitable Work of yours, and bless you, even you, who do now present these before him. For the Prayers of them and of their Parents shall take Place; the Blessings of these that were ready to perish, not with Cold and Hunger, and Nakedness only, but without this your pious Care, even eternally, through an idle and dissolute Life; the Blessings of these, I say, shall come upon you: And they shall be Intercessors for you at the Throne of JESUS, who did once vouchsafe to be Poor himself, but is now exalted to the Right Hand of GOD, there to be their Patron and ours. Before whom, when, in the great and terrible Day, wherein we must all give an Account of our own Works, it shall be required of us, whom have ye Fed, whom Cloathed, whom Educated in the Fear and Service of GOD: These here present, and all other Objects of your Charity, shall stand up and appear as your Vouchers: And for the eternal Reward of your Charity, may you then hear the Merciful JESUS, our Lord and Judge, say to you, *Come ye blessed of my Father, what ye did to the least of these little ones, ye did it unto me, enter into the Joy of your Lord.*

LET me therefore, worthy Friends, conclude this Discourse, as the Apostle did his ; that however what has now, from a sincere Zeal to this good Work, been offered to your Meditations, may possibly affect you ; I do exhort you, I beseech you, I conjure you by the Lord JESUS, that you would ever remember His most Sacred Words, which carry in them the express Character of His very Soul ; the true Spirit of His Religion ; and the happiest State of the Christian Life ; write them in your Hearts, never to be forgotten, how he said, *It is more Blessed to give than to receive.*





A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of

St. S E P U L C H R E,

MAY 28. 1713.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By WILLIAM, Lord Bishop of CHESTER.

E P H E S. VI. 4.

— *Bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.*



THESE Words are a general Command to all Parents, to be careful to give their Children a religious, and (as some Learned Men interpret the Original Word, which we here render *Nurture*) an ingenuous Education. But I shall at present make

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Use of them only to introduce a Discourse, concerning the Excellency of that Charity, which, through the Blessing of GOD, has, of late, generally obtained amongst us, of Erecting and Maintaining CHARITY-SCHOOLS, for the Educating of poor Children, both Boys and Girls, in a true Sense of the Christian Religion, as professed by the Church of *England*; and in an useful Way, of fitting them for some honest worldly Calling or Employment. And hence I shall take Occasion to exhort and provoke all Persons, concerned either in the supporting or managing of this Charity, to the utmost Zeal and Diligence in so excellent a Work.

AND, in Order to this, I must beg of you seriously to consider, along with me, the following Particulars.

First, THE Greatness of this Charity, with Respect to the poor Children themselves, who are the immediate Objects of it.

Secondly, THE very extensive and lasting Beneficialness of it, to many others, as well as to them.

Thirdly, THE Reputation and Advantage which it will bring to the Publick.

Fourthly, THE Honour, which will redound from it to GOD, our Blessed Saviour, and our Holy Religion. And,

Lastly, THE Acceptableness of it in GOD's Sight, and the certain and great Rewards that will attend and follow it, in this Life, and that which is to come.

First, THE Greatness of this Charity, with Respect to the poor Children themselves, who are the immediate Objects of it. And this will best appear, from

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considering and comparing together the vastly different Estates and Conditions of these Children, before, and since this Charity; and that too in Regard to their Souls, as well as Bodies.

BEFORE this Charity, many of these poor Children were, even in Respect of their Bodies, in a most forlorn and miserable Condition: destitute, in great Measure, of the common Necessaries of Life, Meat, Drink, and Raiment, and of the common Care and Protection, which is due to their tender Years; and, by Reason of this, exposed to great present Inconveniencies, Hardships, and Dangers; and yet, which is much worse, generally educated in such a Manner, as was so far from being likely to enable them, to prevent or remedy these Inconveniencies, Hardships, and Dangers, for the future, that, on the contrary, it surely threatned them with much greater, as they should grow up, even the very greatest that can possibly befall our Bodies in this Life, extreme Want, Shame, Pain, Sicknefs, an untimely, and, but too probably, most ignominious Death.

BUT alas! all this was even as nothing, if compared with the Miseries and Dangers which they were under, in Respect of their Souls. For these, though infinitely the most precious Part of them, were, as is but too too common, generally less taken Care of than their Bodies: and, either through the Thoughtlessness, Incapacity, or wilful Negligence of those, to whom the Care of them belonged, lay very much disregarded and uncultivated; void of a true Sense of GOD and Religion, and the Way to present and future Happiness; and consequently sure to become a Prey to the Devil, (who never fails to take Possession, and may with great Ease do so, where Religion has not done it be-

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fore him) and, by becoming his Vassals, to forfeit all Title to true Peace, Comfort, and Happiness in this Life, and to have only reserved for them the dismal Inheritance of everlasting Torments, in which too their beloved Bodies must share with them, in the next Life.

O H most dreadful State, and most worthy of all Manner of Christian Pity and Assistance !

AND, blessed be G O D, it finds both very effectually in our CHARITY-SCHOOLS: in most of which, the bodily Wants and Miseries of these poor Children are, to some Degree, in a few wholly, supply'd and remedy'd, even for the present; and, in all of which, the Children themselves are bred up in a very likely Way, of becoming able soon to provide a total Supply and Remedy for them, in Time to come. And, which is infinitely more worthy our Consideration, in all of which, the Wants of these poor Childrens Souls are supply'd, in full Measure, pressed down, and even running over into their Bosoms: and the Miseries which had either seiz'd, or threatned these, are removed and guarded against, with the utmost Care and Diligence possible. In which, the Principles of all true saving Knowledge are most faithfully and plainly instill'd into, and assiduously inculcated upon, the Minds of these poor Children: and they are, at the same Time, trained up in the Practice of all such Christian Graces and Virtues, as ought constantly to accompany this Knowledge. In which, they are taught to read the Word of eternal Life, to pray for the Assistance of G O D's Holy Spirit, to know and believe in their only Lord and Saviour J E S U S C H R I S T, and to become obedient to his Will, and, by so doing, to be most happy, both in Body and Soul, both now and evermore.

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OH Glorious Charity, doing Good to the whole Man, but especially to the better Part of him : extending to his whole Duration, his temporary Life here, his eternal One hereafter : redressing present Evils, preventing future ones : averting the greatest Mischiefs, procuring the greatest Goods : guarding against all manner of Harms, promising all manner of Blessings ; and, to use but few Words, rescuing our Brethren from the very Jaws of Hell, and setting wide open the Gates of Heaven for them. Can any one, that has the least Spark of Brotherly Love remaining in him, the least Fellow-feeling of the Wants and Miseries of others, forbear doing all that is in his Power, for the Support, Encouragement, and Improvement of such a Charity as this ?

Secondly, A farther Proof of the Excellency of this Charity is, the very extensive and lasting Beneficialness of it, to many others, as well as these poor Children. It cannot but be an immediate and very sensible Refreshment and Comfort to the Parents, Relations, and near Friends of these poor Children, to see them put into so hopeful a Way of becoming happy, both in this World, and that which is to come. And who can tell how serviceable and helpful these Children may, in after-times, prove, to their Parents, Relations and Friends, by Means of this their useful Education ? Nay, who knows but that the Religious Education of these Children may often become the happy Occasion, of bringing Salvation it self home to their Parents, Relations, Friends, and Companions ? To be sure, when these Children shall grow up, and spread themselves in several Places and Stations in the World : All that shall receive any Manner of Benefit from them, (and who
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can so much as conjecture, how vast the Number of these will be? not only of private Persons or Families, but even of publick Societies, Towns, Cities, Commonwealths, Nations, Kingdoms, &c.) will have Reason to thank this their good Education for it. Nay farther, all those, who would have been in Danger of receiving Harm from these poor Children, if they had not been thus religiously and usefully educated, will partake in this very extensive Beneficialness of their Education. And then there can be no Doubt, but that the Influence of this Education will shew it self, in great Variety of Ways and Manners, making these Children much better, and more beneficial, in every Relation, Station, Condition, and Circumstance of Life, which they shall happen to be engaged in, than they could possibly have been without it.

FARTHER, as to the Lastingness of the beneficial Effects of this Charity, it will, in this Respect, transcend most other Charities. For, whereas many of these, as the Meat, Drink, and Cloaths, which we give to our poor Brethren, serve only a present Occasion, and consume and perish in the very using of them: the Benefits of this will be much more solid, fix'd, and durable: and can hardly fail of propagating themselves, even to the very End of the World. For, as the Impressions of a religious and useful Education, (which are naturally apt to sink deep in the soft and pliant Time of Youth, and consequently to become very firm and lasting, not, without great Difficulty, to be defac'd, much more utterly worn out) and the Blessing of GOD, which doth always accompany such an Education, will, morally speaking, insure these poor Children for Blessings to Mankind, throughout their own Generation,
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that long Tract of Time which they have before them : so the sensible Experience, which they shall have in themselves, of the great Advantageousness of such a religious and useful Education, will necessarily prompt them to use their utmost Endeavours to give their Children the like ; and so it will be transmitted down, from Father to Son, even to all Generations.

NAY, and forasmuch as the chief Benefits of this Charity, which are to be thus propagated, are of a spiritual Nature, they will not suffer themselves to be stinted and confined to the narrow Bounds of Time and this World, but will go along with many, 'tis to be hop'd with most, of those who shall partake of them, into the next World, and there make them shine forth, in Bliss and Glory, to all Eternity.

IF then we desire to do an universal and everlasting Charity, here it is for us : If we desire that all, even our latest, Posterity may be the better for our Charity, lo ! here a Charity for which all Generations, yet to come, shall call us Blessed. Nay, if we desire to see the happy Monuments of our Charity, in Heaven it self, to all Eternity : behold a sure Way of enabling these poor Children now before us, one Day to give us, both in themselves and vast Numbers of others, this glorious and blissful Sight.

Thirdly, LET us consider the Reputation and Advantage, which this Charity will bring to the Publick. It has a long Time been one of the most grievous Reproaches, and heavy Burdens, of this Nation, that it has abounded with Beggars and idle Persons, with Thieves and Robbers, with common Swearers and common Prostitutes ; nay, and has had its full Share
of

of the very worst of Villains, wilful Perjurers, Incendiaries, Murderers, Assassins, &c. This our neighbouring Nations have been very often casting in our Teeth: this we are continually making Laws to prevent: this our frequent Examples of Justice too plainly confess. And whence, think we, have these Mischiefs chiefly arisen? Has it not been, almost wholly, from Want of a due Care in Educating the Children of our Poor? who, without having previously been instructed in a true Sense of Religion, or bred up to any honest Calling or Employment, have been, generally, left to get a Livelihood in such Ways as they could: and have been sure to make Choice of those Ways of doing this, which agreed best with that idle and slothful Temper, which they had all along been brought up in; and not so much to enquire, whether a Way of Life was honest and lawful, as whether it was easy and suitable to their Inclinations. And how soon then might all these Mischiefs be, in great Measure, remedy'd, by taking away, at once, the main Cause of them? I mean, by providing, that the Children of our Poor may no longer want such an Education, as is proper for them: such a religious Education, as may sufficiently fortify them with Principles against these wicked Practices: such an useful Education, as may enable them to get a comfortable Livelihood, in an honest Way, and not suffer them to be expos'd to the many, great and dangerous Temptations to the contrary.

AND oh! what an Honour would it be to our Nation, thus, at once, to have most of these foul Blots and Scandals wip'd off from it? to have no Body seen in Want, no Body unemploy'd: no dismal Stories of Robberies and Housebreakings: no horrid Noise of
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Oaths and Execrations : no Disgrace or Danger, from infamous or lewd Persons : and hardly so much as a soft Whisper, to be sure no loud Out-cry, of Blood and Murder, heard amongst us ; and consequently, to have Whippings, Pilloryings, and Executions, as rare, as they are now common. What a noble Idea would this give all Foreigners, of the Power, Wisdom, and Justice of our Government ? What an Emulation would it raise in them, of becoming like us ? How would it make us a Praise and a Glory, instead of a Reproach and a Scorn, as we have too long hitherto been, upon these Accounts, in the Sight of all People ?

AND how easy and advantageous would it be, as well as reputable to the Publick, to have those poor Families, which had too often been Nurseries of idle Persons, Beggars, and Villains, turned into Nurseries of honest and industrious Servants, diligent and skilful Apprentices, faithful and profitable Members of our Common-Wealth ? to have so many new Pair of Hands gain'd to its Service : so many Fears, Dangers, and Burdens, taken off from it : and so much Quiet, Security and Assistance added to it. In one Word, to have Order instead of Confusion, Wealth instead of Poverty, Virtue instead of Vice, and consequently GOD's Blessings instead of his Curses.

AND who then, that professeth himself a Loyal Subject to his QUEEN, and an hearty Lover of his Country, can, for Shame, refuse to give all possible Assistance to such a Charity as this, in which the Honour and Interest of both are so nearly concerned ? Who, that makes any the least Pretence to Publick-spiritedness, shall dare not to encourage this sure and ample Way, of serving the Publick ? Nay, to come

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yet lower, who that has any Regard, either to his own, or his Neighbour's, share in the common Happiness, must not, both in Love and Prudence, have great Regard to this Charity, which so directly and powerfully tends to promote this Happiness?

O R, if Regards to Men will not much move us; let us try what our Regard to G O D, our Blessed Saviour, and our Holy Religion, will do, by considering,

Fourthly, T H E Honour that will redound to them, from this Charity. G O D and our Blessed Saviour are never more truly and greatly honoured, than when Souls are gain'd to them: when those, who were in Danger of becoming the Devil's Servants, are snatch'd out of his Hands, and devoted to them: when they, who had usually been the Prophaners of their Holy-Days, the Blasphemers of their Sacred Names, the Contemners of their Commandments, the Corrupters of their People, and the Reproach of their Religion, are turn'd into exemplary Patterns, of sanctifying their Days, Reverencing their Names, Walking in all their Commandments with a perfect Heart, inviting others, by their good Works, to glorifie their Father which is in Heaven, and adorning the Doctrine of G O D and our Saviour in all Things.

A N D then, as to Religion, the greatest Honour, which we can possibly do to that, is to make its Power and Beauty shew forth themselves in the Lives of its Professors: and especially of those, who before had too often been, by the Wickedness of their Lives, both an intolerable Disgrace to it, and one of the main Obstacles of the Propagation of it. 'This is the surest Way, both to render Religion it self all-glorious within, and to
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win over to it all such, as are most likely to increase its Glory, from without.

AND this, we all know, is the chief Design of our CHARITY-SCHOOLS; to reform the Lives of a Class of Mankind, which, to the utmost Degree, needed Reformation: and, by so doing, both to increase true Religion, and establish it upon a lasting Foot amongst us. And how well fitted they are to compass this Design, let the Reason of the Thing it self speak. It is but a very difficult, and almost hopeless, Attempt, to prevail upon the Generality of old Sinners, such as have been long accustomed to do Evil, to learn to do Well: and though no Pains should be spared in this Attempt, because some Service to Religion may be done by it: yet we can never expect, this Way, very much to amend the Manners of a corrupt and degenerate People, and to bring in an uniform, substantial, and durable Regulation of the Lives of Men, according to the exact Rules of true Christian Piety and Virtue. The only sure, as well as most easy, Way of doing this, is, by beginning early with Children, before any evil Habit has taken Possession of them, and sowing in their soft and fertile Minds the good Seed of eternal Life, and from Time to Time so cultivating and improving it, that it may bring forth its Fruit in due Season. And oh! what a blessed Harvest may we one Day hope to reap from this good Seed, sown in such good Ground; nay, from having that very Ground made profitable, and to abound with Wheat, which before, most commonly, ran all to Weeds, or at best brought forth Tares only? What a glorious Prospect of a rising, flourishing, and even everlasting State of Piety and Virtue have we now before us, when vast Numbers of
those,

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those, who were in imminent Danger of becoming sworn Enemies to GOD and Goodness, are carefully trained up, almost from their very Infancy, to GOD's Service, and so effectually taught the Way, in which they should go, that when they are old, they will probably not depart from it, but teach it to their Children, and their Childrens Children, unto all Generations?

NAY, and the other Design of this Charity likewise, which is to fit these poor Children for some useful Employment, and thereby to secure to them a comfortable Subsistence in the World, will be more than a little for GOD's Glory. Since hereby his Providential Care for the Good, even of the meanest of his Servants, will appear: the great End, which He aim'd at, of making all Men serviceable to the common Interests of Society, will be promoted: and many of the most scandalous Vices, as you have before seen, will be avoided, and, on the contrary, many of the most amiable Virtues cultivated and improv'd.

ONE Thing more I cannot help observing, under this Head: and that is, that this Way of Educating the Children of our Poor, will be no mean Security to, no small Enlargement of, the best and purest of all Christian Churches, our Church of *England*. Hardly any one Thing has more help'd on our unhappy Schisms and Dissentions, than that Ignorance of, and Indifferency to, all Religion, which have so long been taken Notice of, in the lowest of our People: of whom all Schismatical Sects and Parties have, in their Beginnings at least, been chiefly compos'd. And indeed it is no great Wonder, that they, who are indifferent to all Religion, should readily put on any particular Form of it, which may be of worldly Advantage to them. But we hope now,
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by the Blessing of GOD, soon to see an End of this : when the Children of our Poor shall be early well-instructed, both in the Principles of the Christian Religion in general, and the Way of worshipping GOD in the Church of *England* in particular : and so shall not be liable, as they have been, *to be tofs'd to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine, and carry'd about with the Sleight and cunning Craftiness of Men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive ;* but shall become rooted and established in the true Faith and Worship, and able to give an Answer of the Hope that is in them, and both to turn away from, nay, and even rebuke Gainfayers.

IN vain then shall any Man call himself a good Man, or a good Christian, much less a good *Church of England Man*, that will not most readily do any Thing in his Power, for the promoting of this Charity : a Charity design'd to such excellent Purposes, as utterly to supplant Atheism, Deism, Prophaneness, and Immorality, and to shut out Heresy and Schism, from polluting the Purity, and disturbing the Peace, of the best of Churches, for evermore.

Lastly, To provoke us to the utmost to this good Work, let us consider the Acceptableness of it in GOD's Sight, and the certain and great Rewards, that will attend and follow it, in this Life, and that which is to come. But surely I have already sufficiently prov'd the Acceptableness of this Charity in GOD's Sight, when I shew'd you how much it is, for His and His Son's Honour, for the Advancement of true Religion, and for securing and promoting the present and future Happiness of Mankind. I shall therefore only add, upon this Head, that no Christian Grace is more highly in

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GOD'S Esteem, than Charity; no Instance of Charity more so than that which reacheth to the Souls, as well as Bodies of our Brethren; and no Objects of it more so, than little Children, whom our Lord himself, whilst here on Earth, was pleas'd to express the most tender Concern and Affection for.

AND then, that what is thus acceptable in GOD'S Sight, will be surely rewarded by him, is one of the first Principles of Religion, and consequently cannot need any Proof here. But perhaps it may be a little necessary, to put you in Mind particularly of some of those Rewards, that will certainly attend this Charity, in this World, and that which is to come.

IN this World, a mighty Pleasure will attend the Exercise of this Charity: it being natural for us to delight, in supplying the Wants, and easing the Miseries of our Brethren: more especially of Children, whose Innocence and Helplessness do, in a more than ordinary Manner, invite, nay even extort, Compassion and Assistance from us; and as natural likewise to delight, in beholding these Plants of our own Hands grow up, thrive and prosper, spread their beneficial Branches far and wide, and both yield much Fruit at present, and promise a great deal more, in Time to come. So that here we have a great, a lasting, and yet a cheap, Pleasure: a Pleasure great enough, for the holy Angels, our Blessed Saviour, and GOD himself, to partake with us in: a Pleasure, which will be every Day increasing and improving; and yet a Pleasure purchas'd for a Trifle, for a small Part of those Riches, the whole Mass of which, if it were needed, would not be too great a Price for it.

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AND then, what an Honour will it be for us, of this present Age, to be instrumental in laying the Foundations of a much better State of Things, than we now enjoy, both in respect of Religion and Civil Policy, for all Generations? How dear and precious will this make our Memories to all future Ages? How will the general Thanks and Praises of Mankind begin to raise us a Name and a Memorial, as soon as they shall find the blessed Effects of this Charity? How will these Thanks and Praises grow and improve, as these blessed Effects shall? How will they last and hold on, with them, till Time it self shall be no more? Oh! what Glory is like to the Glory of Reforming Mankind: of securing and increasing the Ease and Happiness both of the present Age, and the latest Posterity: of promoting both their temporal and eternal Interests?

NOR will the Profit of this Charity, be at all inferior, either to the Honour or the Pleasure of it. For, not to repeat what I have before said, of the natural Tendency of this Charity, to bring in considerable Profit, both to the Publick and particular Persons: nor to insist upon those manifold Blessings of GOD, which we have just Reason to hope for, from this, in common with other Charities; are there not several special, and most highly desirable, Advantages and Blessings, which this Charity will be most likely to procure for us? Will it not be a mighty Incitement of our own Children, to value, and make a right Use of, a good Education, to let them see how careful we are, how willing to be at any Cost and Pains to bestow it upon others? Will not this Charity, for the Children of our Neighbours, be a very probable Mean to incline GOD to prosper all our Endeavours for the Happiness of our own?

Nay, may it not very probably incline Him even to give Children to those, to whom before He had not vouchsafed that, generally so much desir'd, Blessing? And then, what Course can we take so likely to secure the Continuance of GOD's Mercies to us, in our publick Capacity as a Nation, as this of Reforming our Manners in the most effectual Way, and thereby making our selves such a People, as GOD may delight to do Good to, and set up on high above all the Nations of the Earth? What so sure Way, for the lasting Preservation of our most Holy and Invaluable Religion amongst us, as our thus instructing, in a true Sense of it, those who before were but little, or not at all, acquainted with it: as our thus manifesting to Divine Providence, our sincere Love of it, and our earnest Endeavours to propagate and increase it? In one Word, what can so much invite GOD, to lengthen out to us, to the very utmost, the Life and Health of our most gracious QUEEN, who is, under Him, the Giver and Protector of all our Happiness, as our thus making Her Reign, every Day more and more, for his Glory?

THEN, as to the next World, who knows not that, as all our good Works will follow us thither, and our Works of Charity will, at the great Day of Judgment, be available with GOD, above all others, for procuring his Favour towards us: So that a yet more especial Regard will be had to those Works of Charity, which have been instrumental, in saving Souls alive, and turning many to Righteousness? And that those Persons shall then be plac'd very near to their blessed Lord, in his Kingdom of Glory, who have been careful nearly to imitate him here, in his dear Love of Children, and the Souls of Men.

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To sum up all then that has been said, in as few Words as may be: If we have any true Sense and Fellow-feeling of the Wants and Miseries of our Brethren, any sincere Compassion and Concern, either for the Souls or Bodies of those, who stand in utmost Need of our Assistance: If we would dispence our Charity, to the very best Advantage, spread it as wide, and make it last as long, as is possible: If we wish well to our Government, our Neighbours, or our selves: If we have a due Regard for the Honour of *GOD*, our Blessed Saviour, and our Holy Religion, and the Peace and Prosperity of our Establish'd Church: Nay, if we desire to gratify our own Bowels, to promote our own Honour and Advantage; to recommend our selves most effectually to *GOD*'s Favour, and, by so doing, to secure all Manner of Blessings from Him, upon our selves, our Families, our Country, our *QUEEN*, our Religion, in this Life, and a most transcendent Portion of Bliss and Glory in the next Life: Lo! here an happy Opportunity of demonstrating all this at once, now before us.

AND what shall I more say? Shall I put you in Mind, of the universal Approbation and Encouragement, which this Charity has met with, from all wise and good Men? Shall I urge to you the Example of our most Gracious *QUEEN*, who has both been Her self a most bountiful Benefactress to it, and given it in particular Charge to all Her Bishops, to do their best towards enlarging and promoting it? Shall I appeal to our Experience of the Thing it self, and shew, from the modest and innocent Behaviour of these poor Children, their good Reading, perfect Repetition of the Church-Catechism, and other good Books, excellent

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Hand-writing, and several other useful Qualifications, which they have actually attain'd; how well this Charity answers the noble Ends propos'd by it? Shall I attempt to prove, that the signal Blessings, which we have of late receiv'd from GOD, both in War and in Peace, have been probably bestow'd by Him, very much as a Reward, of this and our other Publick Charities? And shall I need to call to your Remembrance, how strictly such signal Blessings require real Thanksgivings to GOD for them, and to demonstrate how truly our Improvement of this Charity will be such an one? Or rather, shall I not hasten to conclude all, with a few Words of Exhortation, to all manner of Persons concern'd in this Charity?

AND *First*, As to you, poor Children; What an unspeakable Blessing ought you to think it, that GOD has put it into the Hearts of well-dispos'd People to take such Care of you, as your own Parents were not able to take: by giving you an Education, in all Respects, so proper for you, that it can scarce possibly fail, but thro' your own Fault, of making you happy both here and hereafter? How ought this Consideration to fill your Hearts and Mouths, with daily Thanksgivings to GOD, for so great a Blessing? How ought it to provoke you, to offer up daily your most fervent Prayers to Him, for such kind Benefactors? And above all, how willing and careful ought it to make you, exactly to observe the Rules of this your Education, and earnestly to apply to the Throne of Grace for the Divine Blessing upon it, that you may be sure, in due Time, to reap all those good Fruits, which are so justly to be expected from it?

Next, As to you Masters and Mistresses, How seriously ought you to consider, what a great and important

portant Trust is committed to your Charge, and what mighty Things are expected from your discreet and faithful Management of it? How fearful should you be, lest so excellent and well-appointed a Charity should, in any Measure, miscarry, through your Negligence or Misbehaviour? How careful to prevent this, by a most strict Observance of those Rules, which are given you, to govern your selves by? How cheerful should you be, in discharging a Duty, for which you will be sure of so much Thanks and Praise, both from GOD and Man? And, above all, how exemplary, in becoming to your Scholars, in all Things, Patterns of good Works: how zealous in imploring GOD's Blessing on your Endeavours for their Good: two of the best Means, to make all your other Endeavours successful?

Lastly, As to all that, by their Alms, or any other Ways, are assistant to this Charity, and more especially to the immediate Trustees and Governours of it: What a comfortable Consideration must it be to them, that either their Money, their Time, their Pains, or all, have been employ'd in the supporting, managing, increasing, and improving of so excellent a Charity as this? A Charity, as you have heard, so much for the Honour of GOD, the Advancement of true Religion, and the Publick and Private, the Temporal and Spiritual, the Present and Future Happiness of Mankind; and, consequently, so highly acceptable both to GOD and Man, and so sure to meet with abundant Rewards from both. And what an Encouragement ought this to be to all such, to shew the same Diligence in this good Work, even unto the End, nay, and to abound in it more and more?

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BLESSED JESU! Can we cast our Eyes round about us, and behold the vast Numbers of Children now before us, that, within a little Time, have been gathered under the Wings of this Charity, and not become all Joy and Transport at the glorious Spectacle, all Desire and Zeal to inlarge and improve it? Can we love Thee, and yet grudge any Cost and Pains, in thus spreading thy Religion, and thy Glory? Can we love our Brethren, and yet refuse to bear any Share, in so charitable a Work as that, of helping to make them happy, both in Body and Soul, both now and for ever? Oh no! Rather, much rather, we adore and bless Thee, that Thou vouchsafest to give us Leave, to become Instruments of thy Glory, and our Brethrens Happiness, upon such easy Conditions, as those now before us. We embrace, with all possible Joy and Thankfulness, this blessed Opportunity of manifesting our Love to Thee and them: we will hold it fast, as long as we live: we will be ever increasing, excelling, and abounding in it more and more: that so, if possible, we may hereby know, that we are of the Truth, and assure our Hearts before GOD, in this Life; and, which is yet infinitely more, have them established unblameable in Holiness before Him, at thy Coming with all thy Saints.

*Even so! and then, Come Lord JESUS,
Come quickly.*





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. SEPULCHRE,

MAY 20. 1714.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By JOHN, Lord Bishop of LONDON.

MATTH. XIX. 14.

— *Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.*



HE inimitable Sanctity which shone with so much Lustre in the Life and Actions of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, had mov'd some Persons, piously-dispos'd, as we may well conclude, to bring little Children, that he might, according to the Ceremony frequent among the *Jews*, lay his Hands upon them, pray for, and bless them. This our Lord's Disciples, who knew not yet what Spirit their Master, and themselves were of, looked upon as too bold an Intrusion, and opposed it; but were
blam'd,

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blam'd, and order'd to suffer little Children, and not forbid them to come to CHRIST; and that for a Reason the Disciples would scarce have comprehended, if it had not been told them in the Words of this Text; *Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*: that is, Little Children are not only capable, notwithstanding their tender Age, to become Members of CHRIST, but they, and others endow'd with such Qualifications as are most observable in Children, are the constituent Parts of this Kingdom: And then, by the Rule of Correlation, as that Kingdom is compos'd of them, so they do thereby belong to it. Now, to belong to any Kingdom, as a Subject-Member of it, implies, in its first and most obvious Sense, both a Benefit and a Duty; on the one Hand, Protection; and on the other, Obedience: And the Kingdom of Heaven includes both the Kingdom of Grace and of Glory. So that in these Words we have chiefly to consider, *The great Benefits* exhibited; *The Duty* required; and *The Qualifications* suppos'd: Which is the Order I intend to observe in speaking to you upon these Words, and on this Occasion.

AND first, of the *Benefits* of being Members of the Kingdom of Heaven, in the Extent I have told you that Expression imports, with Reference, namely, both to this present Life, and that which is to come.

IT is a Principle suppos'd in my Text, and self-evident to all that own a GOD, and his Providence, and another World, that *the Kingdom is the Lord's, and that He is Governour among the People*; as also that *He, even the Lord of Hosts, is the King of Glory*;
a King,

a King, as St. Paul speaks, Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only Wise GOD.

THIS Truth appeared even in the midst of Heathen Darkness, and to it they generally gave Witness: The Apostle therefore argued with the *Athenians* upon an avowed Topick, that all Men are the *Offspring of GOD*; that *in Him they live, move, and have their Being*; and accordingly, as his Creatures, are subject to his Dominion, and Members of his Kingdom here upon Earth; so it was from the Creation, and so it will be to the World's End.

NEVERTHELESS, as after GOD had called *Abraham*, and entered into Covenant with him, and his Posterity, that He would be their GOD, and they should be his People, in a more peculiar Manner than He was the GOD of the other Nations of the World, or those Nations were his People; so the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth, must import a distinguishing Favour; and that those who are the Subjects of it, are Partakers of some peculiar Advantages and Benefits, that are not enjoy'd in common by the rest of Mankind.

NOW these Advantages must arise from something peculiar, either to the Institution, or the Conduct, *i. e.* either to the Laws, or the Administration of such a Kingdom: For no Government is better than another, as to the Benefit arising to the Parties governed; but as its Laws are more wise and useful, and the Execution of them more faithful and regular than those of other Nations.

ACCORDINGLY, to be convinced of the great Benefits of being in, or of, the Kingdom of Heaven, you need only observe, that as it appears from the
History

History of the Old Testament, that the most High, both as their Lawgiver and Governour, ruled the Nation of the *Jews* in a more gracious and beneficent Manner, than what the rest of the World then enjoy'd; so much more graciously, and with a more tender Care and Concern, does our Lord JESUS CHRIST exercise that Universality of Power, both in Heaven and Earth, which the Father has given him over the Subjects of his Kingdom; that is, over those that, by the federal Right of Baptism, are initiated into the Covenant of Grace, and abide in that Grace; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth; and as such, they have the great Advantage of being directed by Laws, that so plainly chalk out their Rule of Duty, that he that *runs may read, and learn what it is that our Lord and Governour requires* of us, in Order to do Him Service, and promote our own Happiness. Laws not more plain and intelligible to every well-disposed and teachable Mind, than exactly suited both to the Notions of our own Reason, and to the Relief of those Frailties and Infirmities, with which humane Nature, in its lapsed State, is beset and encompassed. They teach us how to preserve our Innocency, and how to recover it; how to live in all Godliness and Honesty; and when therein we have fail'd, how to do Works meet for Repentance, and for the Recovery of his Grace and Favour.

IN like gracious Manner does our heavenly King watch over us for Good, in all the Course of our Life here upon Earth. From a State of spiritual Slavery, and of Subjection to our greatest and most pernicious Enemies, He has purchased us to Himself, and
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for our Redemption paid a greater Price than all created Nature could ever have furnish'd. Himself, from his Throne of Glory, descended upon Earth, took our Nature upon him, submitted to all, but Sin only, that in a mortal State can be called miserable; liv'd in a mean and despis'd Condition, and dy'd in the greatest Degrees of Pain and Ignominy; and having thus, by a Merit unspeakable, because infinite, made us His, by Methods of unparallel'd Mercy, He does all on his Part to keep us so. Not the Tenderness of a Mother towards her sucking Infant, not the Care of the Apple of an Eye, not the Watchfulness of a Shepherd over his Flock, or the Faithfulness of a good Steward, nothing that can enter into the Heart of Man to conceive, can, in any Degree of Proportion, represent, much less equal, his Love and Care of us.

By his holy Doctrine and Example, He directs our Paths; by his Spirit, He enables us both to will and to do; by his Providence, He makes all Things work together for our Good; by the Assurance of Rewards, He invites us; by the Terrors of most severe Penalties, He restrains our Aberrations; and when at any Time He calls us to suffer for his Sake, it is with express Purpose, that such Sufferings shall be short in their Duration, and their Reward endless; that *our light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, in that Kingdom of Glory, which is it self eternal in the Heavens.*

IN this World we can have but transient Rewards, as well as Sufferings; for neither we, nor it, are of
any

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any permanent Duration : The Fashion of it, the Scheme of Things, whether grateful or uneasy to us, soon passes away, and soon also we are gone, and all our earthly Thoughts perish, and our temporal Rewards or Sufferings come to an End ; but in the World to come, Mortality will put on Incorruption, and neither the Joys of the Blessed ever be abated, nor the Worm of the Tormented ever die, or the Fire be quenched. I will not suppose any that I now speak to, is fallen under Delusions so contradictory to the most connate Notions of our Minds, to the general Consent of Mankind, and to the loud Voice of Reason, as well as Revelation, as to doubt of this Principle, that there will, in a future State, be a Day of Retribution, in which *they that have done good, shall receive their good things ; and they that have done evil, shall be tormented.*

THE Consequence of this is, that as in this Life, the faithful Subjects and Servants of CHRIST our Lord, are his peculiar Care ; so in his Kingdom of Glory, he will be their exceeding great Reward ; and these two together, make up the Benefits that accrue unto those that are of the Kingdom of Heaven : Benefits, which I can the less pretend fully to display to you, because, if even the Tongue of an Angel should be employ'd to speak of them, they would be more than he could be able to express ; or you, till you have put off Mortality, be able to comprehend. Let it then suffice, that even the faint and imperfect Idea that has been laid before you, of the Advantages arising from being of the Kingdom of Heaven, obliges all those that pretend to reap those Advan-

tages,

tages, to make those Returns upon which only they can have a Title to them ; that is, that the Protection, and all the blessed Consequents of it, which CHRIST our Lord exhibits on his Part to those that are of his Kingdom, be answered by such an Obedience as he requires, and will accept ; which is the *Second* Matter I am to speak to.

AND upon this Subject I shall need to speak the less, because it is so evident in it self, that, as we are the Creatures of GOD, as we are the Redeemed of the Lord, as we are Parties to a solemn Contract and Covenant between GOD and Man, as we are under the Government and Protection of Heaven, we are ty'd by the Bonds of Duty, of Gratitude, of Justice, and of Interest, to perform the Conditions that result from these several Relations. Now what these Conditions are, you cannot be ignorant ; for, I hope, even these almost Babes and Sucklings, that are now before you, can tell how far our Obligation extends in this Case ; that, namely, in order to prepare the Way of the Lord, and render us capable to receive the Participation of his Grace, we have promised to renounce all Adherence to his and our Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil ; that, to get a Foundation of our Interest in CHRIST, we are engaged to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, because without such Faith, it is impossible to please GOD ; there not being in Nature any other System of Truths, that can have a sufficient Influence upon our Understanding and Wills, so as to produce in us such a Submission and Conformity to the Will
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of GOD, as shall render us acceptable to Him, and secure our Right in his Promises. And as *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of GOD*; so every Thing that is requisite to inform our Minds, and bring us to a perfect Knowledge of the Religion, which CHRIST our Lord came to reveal, and introduce into the World, is compris'd under this Branch of our Obligation. And how many are there that would be willing to stop here? How many that, by a fatal Error, are led to rely upon the Pretence of a lifeless and unactive Faith, and to fancy that this alone, without Obedience, can avail to their Salvation? But *we have not so learned CHRIST*; for so far even infernal Spirits have learn'd him, to the Amazement of their Minds, and Encrease of their Despair and Condemnation. The Doctrines therefore of Salvation go farther, and teach us to add to our Faith, Virtue; and to our Knowledge, its perfect Work, that is, Obedience, which is a natural and necessary Consequence of our being Members of the Kingdom of CHRIST; and through the whole Contexture of the Holy Scriptures, so positively insisted on, that no Truth can stand in a clearer Light. 'Tis expressly declared to be the End for which CHRIST took our Nature upon Him, and we may justly esteem it to be the End for which GOD made the World, and stocked it with reasonable Creatures, capable of understanding his Will, and their Obligations to obey it. All the Blessings of this Life, all the Promises of a better, so intimately depend upon this Principle, that no other Reason can be assign'd, why Mankind should be distinguished from the rest of the Creation,
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by the Promise of Rewards, or the Threatnings of Punishments; it being contrary to the Nature of both, to be apply'd, without some Ground of Distinction arising from the different Qualification of the Objects. This Difference is sufficiently expressed in the first Alternative we meet with in the Word of GOD, before the Fall of Man; and yet more fully in the Second, after his Fall. The first is *Genesis* ii. 16, 17. *Of every Tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* The other, is in *Genesis* iv. 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at the Door.* Shall I need to lead you from these Decisions, in and after the State of Innocence, through the *Mosaical* Dispensation, and then through the Gospel Oeconomy? It cannot surely be needful. For in both, this Truth is so universally spread, that you can scarce read one Chapter, without finding either Blessings actually exhibited, or plainly promised to the Obedient; or Punishments inflicted or threatned to Disobedience. This is so essential to the very Being of any Government, to the Justice of GOD, to our most natural Impressions of the Difference between Virtue and Vice, Good and Evil, that I cannot think it necessary farther to employ your Patience, in pressing this general Assertion, That as we are of, and belong to, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Blessings and Protection of it belong to us; so it is indispensably incumbent on us, to make the Returns of a sincere, universal, and constant Obedience; which are the only Qualifications

of this our Duty, I shall at present mention, and that in a few Words.

To be unsincere in our Obedience to our earthly Superiours, can never be without Guilt; to GOD, never without the greatest Folly: The former, our Hypocrisy may possibly impose upon; the latter, we can never deceive; because, though our Hearts be inscrutable to Men; yet they, and all Things, are open to Him, with whom we have to do; nay, better known to Him than to our selves. All the Springs of our Actions, which our selves are too frequently prone to ascribe to those Motives that ought to be uppermost, are, by Him, infallibly attributed to their proper and true Causes; and too oft the Deceitfulness of our Heart perswades us, that we are only aiming at the Glory of GOD, when to Him it is evident, that we are serving some earthly End, and instead of performing, are quite going astray from our Duty. Nothing therefore can be greater than the Danger of our Insincerity in the Service of GOD; and consequently our Care to avoid it, can never be too great, nor ever sufficient, unless we fix upon this Principle, that our Happiness depends upon GOD's Approbation; and his Approbation, upon our Singleness of Heart, and sincere Intentions, to do all to the Praise and Glory of GOD, preferably to any other Consideration.

To do all, I say, and that infers the Universality of our Obedience, prescrib'd by the Rule both of the Law and Gospel: In the one we are told, it *shall be our Righteousness, if we observe to do all these Commandments before the Lord our GOD, as he has*

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commanded us ; in the other, it is our Saviour's Injunction to his Disciples, *Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* David therefore found it his Duty, and made it his Study, to take the Laws of GOD in their full Extent, and have respect to them all without Exception ; and that because they are all enacted by the same Authority, and therefore are of equal Obligation ; though indeed not at all Times so, as to our actual Obedience, by reason of the Difference between affirmative and negative Precepts. The Observance of the latter, is at all Times strictly our Duty, and we can never be at Liberty to act contrary to any of them. There is no Period of our Life wherein we may, without Guilt, be Idolaters, worship Images, take the Name of GOD in vain, commit Murder, Adultery, Theft, bear false Witness, or covet our Neighbour's Goods. But the positive Precepts, though they be always our Duty, cannot always be actually our Practice. Our Hands, for Example, must, in the proper Seasons, be lifted up in Prayer to GOD, at other Times, extended to relieve the Poor, and frequently employ'd in the Duties of our Calling. In these Respects therefore, it is the Disposition of our Hearts that GOD accepts ; and we may have good Hope of such Acceptance, when we find in our selves a willing Mind, a Joy and Satisfaction at the Returns of those Duties, and of Occasions of putting them in Practice.

ESPECIALLY if, in the next Place, this be a persevering and uninterrupted Disposition, the constant Tenor of our Lives. 'Tis by being thus faithful unto Death, that we are entitled to the Crown of Life, which the Lord has promised to those that love

Him. Consequently an unnatural Intermixture of white and black Days; of some Seasons for Religion, others for Sin and Vanity, would render us not less, nay, the Apostle determines, rather more criminal in the Sight of GOD; and such unsteady Obedience lays us under the Penalty of more Stripes; because the Observance of our Duty at some Times, is a Proof, that we know the Will of our heavenly Father; and, our Neglect of it at others, that we are wilfully disobedient, and altogether unqualified to be of the Kingdom of Heaven, so as to have a Title to those great Blessings, both Temporal and Eternal, which that Relation is intended to convey and instate us in.

THAT it may not be objected, *Who is sufficient for these Things?* since in many, we offend all; it is proper to observe, that the Blood of CHRIST, which, at our Initiation into this Kingdom of Heaven, cleanseth us from all Original Guilt, is also a sufficient Propitiation for our actual Transgressions after Baptism, and only supposes our unfeigned and speedy Repentance. We cannot then always retain our Innocency, but may recover it by the Methods established in this heavenly Constitution; having also the Promise of such Assistances of the Spirit of GOD, as are amply sufficient to help our Infirmities, and enable us both to break off our Sins by Righteousness, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of GOD.

I come now, in the last Place, to consider the *Qualification* supposed in the Text, and shall therein confine my self to what may be suitable to the Occasion of our present Meeting.

AND

AND indeed, when I look upon this numerous Appearance of little Children here before us, and upon you, by whose charitable Care they are educated, what can I say more moving, more capable to fill the Souls of both with an holy Joy, than that *of such is the Kingdom of Heaven?* What can more effectually possess the Minds of the former with Thankfulness and Gratitude to GOD, than that He has, in a Manner unknown to former Times, though most agreeable to the Methods of his Goodness, rais'd up to them Instruments of his Mercy, and by his Grace inspired you, their Benefactors, with a tender Concern for them, both in Respect to the Necessities of this Life; and the Blessings of the next? Without this Relief, in the ordinary Course of Things, their Lot would probably have been Misery and Disgrace, and more certainly such a Degree of Ignorance, as would have highly endanger'd, if not render'd impracticable to them, both the Means of Grace, and the Hope of Glory. The great Charity bestow'd on them, extensive as it is, leaves yet too much Room for their Observation of others, whose Wants unreliev'd, and Minds uncultivated, render their Condition most deplorable. Accordingly these before us doubtless already are, and, by the Blessing of GOD upon the Instruction you provide for them, will daily become more and more thankful to GOD, and to you: To Him, the Fountain and Original of every good and perfect Gift; and to you, the Streams by which the Mercies they receive are convey'd. They will bless both the prime Author, and the Hands, by the Increase of whose Labour they are thus provided for. Thus, I hope, you Children are taught already, and

that the more you grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and of your Duty and Obligations to your Benefactors, you may yet with more Effect, become their Orators at the Throne of Mercy, and from thence draw down upon them, and theirs, Blessings, on some Thirty, some Forty, some an Hundred Fold. I cannot but hope you are now capable to comprehend, how much this will be the Duty of your whole Lives, and that you accordingly have taken these grateful Resolutions.

IN the mean Time, my Brethren, known unto GOD is this your Work of Love; and it cannot but be acceptable in his Sight, that your peculiar Care is employ'd upon such as are, in a Manner, the peculiar Care and Darlings of Heaven. The Poor and Needy, the Fatherless and Forlorn, are those that, *when their Father and Mother forsake them, the Lord taketh up*, and recommends in his Word to our Charity, in the greatest Earnestness of Expression. Be then assured, that if even when the Poor cry in the Affliction and Anguish of their Souls, the Lord heareth them; how much more will He do so, when they offer up their Prayers in the Joy of their Heart? and you may thence conclude, that even this Way you already and daily receive Returns of your Charity. You may also justly esteem it a visible Blessing upon this Institution, not only that under the deplorable Decays of a Spirit of Christianity, there yet remain among us so many Instances of a pious Liberality; but that the Overseers of the Work of these Temples of the Holy Ghost, those to whom the Dispersations of these Charities is entrusted, give such universal Proofs of an unspotted Faithfulness, as could not
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be hoped, without an especial Influence of Heaven, in these our Days especially, when Interest prevails so much over Conscience and Duty, that the best Designs are subject to the Danger of being frustrated by a bad and unfaithful Administration. When we consider the Opposition to this good Work, that may naturally be made by ungodly Men, and must necessarily be expected from the grand Adversary of our Souls, and of all Goodness, we cannot but have Reason to be jealous of it with a godly Jealousy, and very apprehensive of the Endeavours of the Enemy, to *sow Tares among this good Seed*: The Tares perhaps of Novelty, which is ever apt to spoil what is well done, by a Fancy of doing it better; the Tares of earthly Vanity, or uncautious Emulation; an Affectation perhaps of exceeding each other in the Instructions given; which would naturally tend to a dangerous Excess; that, namely, of carrying those Instructions to such Heights as would surpass the Capacity of Infant-Years, and rather serve to entangle, than inform. You therefore that are employ'd in those useful Stations, will, I hope, make it your Business to cultivate the Minds of your Scholars in such Manner, as may instil into them the true Principles of Piety, rather than endeavour to qualify them, by other Attainments, for such a State of Life, as probably very few of them will ever be called to. It appears, I am perswaded, to those that take Cognizance of their Proficiency, that every other Part of your Care answers to that we are all this Day Witnesses of; that is, their good Performance in Singing the Praises of the Lord. Doubtless the End intended thereby is, to fit these Children to joyn, without Reluctance or Difficulty, in this useful

Part of our Publick Devotions. It is accordingly highly laudable, that they are, as we have heard, so sufficiently taught to acquit themselves well in this Respect. But give me leave to observe to you, that such an Excellence this Way, as shall carry them very much above the Capacity of those they are to join with in these Offices, may not be altogether without Inconvenience. It is already Matter of Complaint, that, in several Congregations, five or six Persons that sing well, make all the rest keep Silence, discouraging them from bearing a Part where they are so much out-done; and that naturally tends to stir up those that do better, to some Degree of Pride.

I would add, that as you all see and observe, how very decently these Children before you appear in the Habits provided for them, even herein also it is necessary to keep within due Bounds. They that have had Occasion to frequent this Meeting, may better know, whether the first Beginnings have always been observed; or whether, by Degrees, any Additions have been made. If it be the latter, let me, without the Blame of affected Moroseness, advertise, that this also may have a dangerous Effect. It is doubtless your Intention, that these Objects of your Charity be so educated, as that they may hereafter become useful in inferior Stations; and therefore whatever exceeds now, what may reasonably be expected to be their Lot afterwards, may be too much, and ought to be avoided, least, instead of the Principles of Piety, they should, by your too great Indulgence, imbibe those of Pride.

IN these Cases therefore, our best Security, under the Blessing of God, is a strict Adherence to those plain,

plain, pious, and easy Rules, upon which this Work was first begun, and has hitherto been carried on with so much Success. Upon that Foot, I hope, we shall proceed; and that any Deviations from it, will always be carefully avoided.

MY Brethren, you have begun in the Spirit; *you have hitherto run well*, as the Apostle speaks; let therefore nothing hinder you from carrying on this Work of the Lord, always remembring, that it is the Work of the Lord: His in the Foundation; for it is He that giveth you Power to get Wealth: His in the Exercise; for from Him you have the Will to do Good, and to distribute: His in the Management; for 'tis He that raises you up Stewards, like his Servant *Moses*, faithful in all his House: His then be the Glory, and may it ever be entirely and completely His, unfullied and unmixed with any Degree of Pride or Vanity, with any false Conceits of compensating, by these Charities, for unrepented Sins. Nay, My Brethren, let this your Zeal for the Honour of GOD, for the Good, both temporal and eternal, of these Objects of your Care; for the Recovery of a true Spirit of Religion, and the Reformation of the World, let it have its perfect Work in all your Conversation: As in this Case you piously dedicate a Part of your Substance to GOD, so in all, dedicate unto Him your whole Souls; let Him be your Fear, and let Him be your Dread, and then He will also be your *great Salvation*.

I shall conclude with observing to you, in a very few Words, the Qualification supposed in this Text; and to do this, I shall only need to recur to the living Examples here present; *Of such is the Kingdom*
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dom of Heaven. The Innocency, Meekness, Humility, and Teachableness, which is observable in little Children; their Freedom from grosser Faults, from the Predominancy of such sinful Passions as are too often incident to more advanced Years; these are the Qualities that fit and prepare for the Kingdom of Heaven.

ACCORDINGLY, this Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears; from the Example of these Babes and Sucklings we are taught, *What manner of Men we ought to be;* and as they receive Benefit from our Care, so may we be enabled, by the Grace of GOD, to profit by the Example they set us: And both we, and they, be and remain lively Members of the Kingdom of CHRIST our Lord in this World; and Inheritors of his Glory in the Kingdom of Heaven.





A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

JUNE 9. 1715.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By WILLIAM, Lord Bishop of LINCOLN.

ISAIAH LIV. 13.

*And all thy Children shall be taught of GOD;
and great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*



HOWSOEVER we shall understand the
Prophecy of this Chapter; whether we shall
apply it to the *Restoration* of the *Jewish*
Church and *Nation* after their *Captivity*,
which I take to have been the first, and most proper,
Design of it: Or whether we shall extend it to the
Time of the *Christian Church*, which should afterwards
succeed in the Room of the other; and to which our Sa-
viour, John vi. 45. has apply'd the very *Words* of the
Text:

Text: Thus much is plain, that the Prophet here foretels a glorious Change that should be made in the Circumstances of those of whom he speaks. That from a desolate, low, afflicted State; they should be restored to a peaceable, prosperous, and flourishing Condition. That their Borders should be enlarged; their Breaches be repaired; and their Tranquillity be established. That their Enemies should no more be suffered to prevail against them; nor to bring them under those Difficulties they had before sustained, and from which G O D here promises to deliver them. *Isa. liv. 1. Sing, O Barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into Singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with Child; For more are the Children of the Desolate, than the Children of the Married Wife, saith the LORD. Ver. 2. Enlarge the Place of thy Tent, and let them stretch forth the Curtains of thine Habitations; Ver. 3. — For thou shalt break forth on the Right Hand and on the Left; and thy Seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate Cities to be inhabited. Ver. 7. For a small Moment have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee. Ver. 8. In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee, for a Moment; but with everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith the LORD, thy Redeemer.*

To secure these Blessings, and make his Church as pure in its Doctrine, and holy in its Conversation, as it is here promised to be prosperous in its outward Estate; among the many other Benefits which G O D encourages it to expect from Him, that of my *Text* seems to be the most important; as being indeed the Foundation of all the rest: Namely, That under the Dispensation (whatever it be) which is here spoken of, *All their Children shall be taught of G O D*; that is to say, should
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be instructed by faithful, wise, and good Men, in the Knowledge and Worship of GOD, and in the Nature of that Obedience which He required of them. That to improve this Teaching, and render it truly operative upon their Minds and Actions, GOD would add his Blessing to their Labours; and by the *Grace* of his *Holy Spirit*, give Force and Energy to their Instructions: So our *Saviour* warrants us to interpret this Promise, St. *John* vi. 44, 45. The Result of which should be the happy Enjoyment of all the Blessings, Spiritual and Temporal, spoken of in this Prophecy, and summarily comprehended in the other Part of the Words which I have read to you, *And great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

THESE are the two *Promises* pointed out to us in the *Text*: And which, being apply'd to the Occasion of our present Assembling, will afford us the Two following *Observations*, the Subject of our present Discourse:

Ist, OF the great *Benefit* of a *Religious Instruction* to any People: *All thy Children shall be taught of GOD.*

II dly, OF the *Blessing* which that *Church*, and *People*, may hope to receive of GOD, in which such an *Instruction* is generally encouraged and improved: *Great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

I begin with the *former* of these, to consider,

Ist, THE *Benefit* of a *Religious Instruction* to any People: *All thy Children shall be taught of GOD.*

THAT this Promise was effectually made good to the *Jews*, after their Return from their Captivity, the Accounts we have of their Establishment, both from *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, will not suffer us to doubt. GOD
raised

254 *The Excellency, and Benefits,*

raised up a Sett of excellent Men to instruct them in their Duty ; to reform the Abuses that were crept in amongst them ; to restore his Worship to its antient Purity ; and utterly to root out all Idolatry from the midst of them. And what the Effect of this was, we read in the *viiith, xth, and xiiith Chapters of Nehemiah* : *The People, the Priests, and the Levites ; their Wives, their Sons, and their Daughters ; every one having Knowledge and Understanding ; clave to their Brethren, and enter'd into a Curse, and into an Oath, to walk in GOD's Law, which was given by Moses the Servant of GOD ; and to observe and do all the Commandments of the LORD, and his Judgments, and his Statutes, Nehem. viii. 28, 29.*

THIS was the Result of their *good Instruction* : GOD co-operated with the Instruments He had raised up to teach his People. He opened their Hearts to receive what they taught them : And both of these together had such an Influence upon them, that they not only set all Things in the best Order for the present ; but so rooted the Knowledge, and Service of GOD, in the Minds of their Posterity, that no Tryals or Persecutions could ever afterwards draw them away from it ; or engage them in any of those idolatrous Practices, for which they had so justly, but severely, suffered before.

WHAT the Consequence was of that more perfect Accomplishment which it pleased GOD to make of this *Prophecy* afterwards, by the Publication of his *Gospel*, Rom. i, ii, &c. I shall not need to say. The miserable Estate in which all Mankind, as well *Jews* as *Gentiles*, lay, at the Time of our *Saviour's* Appearing ; the Ignorance and Corruption, which had then overspread the Face of the whole Earth ; as it abundantly shews the Need there was of some such super-natural Assistance to

remove both: So the Event of *GOD's teaching them*, not now by holy Men raised up by Him for that Purpose, but by his own Son, *Heb. i. 1.* no less evidently proves the Benefit of it. Instead of that Blindness under which the Generality of the World before laboured; and that not only with Respect to the great Mysteries of Faith, but to the very Rules of Practice; there presently brake forth the most perfect Knowledge both of the Nature and Worship of *GOD*, and of that *Holiness, without which no Man shall ever see the Lord*, *Heb. xii. 14.* And, in a little Time, Men became as reformed in their Manners, as they were illuminated in their Understandings. Superstition and Idolatry began every where to decay, and give Place to the Service of the only True and Living *GOD*. Justice and Piety, Meekness and Humility, Mercy and Charity; all the most lovely Graces and Ornaments of a Christian Life, appeared in the Manners and Conversation of those who embraced the Gospel. By these they both surprized, and silenced their Enemies: Whilst by the Influence which their *good Instruction* had upon them, they shew'd to what Heights it is possible for those, who are truly *taught of GOD*, (enlightned by his Word, and sanctified by his Holy Spirit) to attain in the Practice of Piety; and how great the Benefit of such an Instruction ought to be esteemed by all of us.

GIVE me Leave, for the farther Illustration of this Remark, to add yet one Instance more; which, I think, should never be forgotten by us. When, in Process of Time, even this great Blessing of the *Gospel-Revelation* began to lose very much of its Influence upon Mens Minds; and the Corruption of its Truths brought in a sad Degeneracy of Morals into the Church: And, for the Punishment of both, *GOD* permitted the barbarous

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Nations to break in upon his Vineyard on every Side ; and a general Ignorance and Superstition to overspread the Face of *Christendom* : How did it please GOD, by the Means of a better *Instruction*, to bring on a glorious *Reformation* of those Errors and Abuses, which had so fatally corrupted, and almost utterly subverted, the Truth of the *Gospel* ? As Learning revived, and Men began more rightly to understand the Doctrine of CHRIST, so did they proportionably improve both in their own Manners, and the true Worship of GOD. Instead of that *Form of Godliness* with which they had, in a great Measure, contented themselves before ; and those *Outward Observations* in which they had been wont to place almost the Sum of their Religion ; they now began to contend in good Earnest after the *inward Power*, and Purity of it. *Pardons and Indulgences, Masses and Prayers for the Dead* ; these, and the like superstitious Practices, became changed into true Repentance, and Reconciliation of Sinners yet living, through Faith in JESUS CHRIST. *Men delayed not till Death to be justified* ; nor hoped to attain that Salvation in the other World, after which they had never laboured to any Purpose in this. In short ; As the Truth of the Gospel became better understood, so did the Practice of Piety improve together with it. Men began once more to live as became those who were rightly instructed in the Way of Godliness ; and by their Actions shew'd at once both the Purity, and Power, of their Principles : And how much a sound Knowledge of the Doctrine of Christianity, is apt to conduce to a *Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST*, Philip. i. 27.

NOR ought it to be any Exception against the Truth of this Remark, that not only Christians in general, but

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we of the reformed Religion in particular, do not seem to shew any such great Influence that our Knowledge has upon our Lives and Actions; or that we are at all better in this Respect, than those who do not enjoy the like Benefit of being *taught of GOD*. For besides that this, I hope, is not altogether true, in Fact; but that, as bad as we generally are, we may yet venture to appeal even to the Practice of many among us, to shew the Efficacy of a *Religious Education*, to the Improvement of a *vertuous and holy Conversation*: Let me, in Answer to this Pretence, observe,

(1st,) THAT perhaps this very *Decay of Piety*, which is *objected* against the *Benefit* of such an *Instruction*, may be, and I believe has been, in a good Measure, owing to the *Want* of it: And will therefore be so far from affording any Argument against the Usefulness of a Religious Education, that, on the contrary, it will serve the more plainly to prove the Advantage of it.

I shall not need to say, what a sad Neglect of *good Instruction* did for many Years prevail among us. How little Care was taken not only by those of the meanest Degree, (tho' by them more especially,) but by too many of a higher Rank, of the Education of their Children. How, instead of being *taught of GOD*; bred up to the Knowledge of their Duty to Him, and in a conscientious Regard to the Practice of it; they were either altogether uninstructed in the Principles of Religion; or rather, were encouraged, by the ill Examples of those with whom they conversed, to despise both the Knowledge and Service of *GOD*; and to do those Things which were destructive to their Salvation. But sure I am, whosoever shall consider how strangely our Youth was neglected in this particular; what little Regard both

Parents, and Masters of Families, were wont to have of their Children, and Servants, as to their Knowledge of their Duty to G O D, and their constant fulfilling of it, may justly fear, that the Complaint which G O D heretofore made against the *Jews*, might but too justly have been apply'd to our selves; *Hos. iv. 6. My People are destroy'd for lack of Knowledge*: And that the Increase of Wickedness, about that Time more especially, among us, cannot be more reasonably ascribed to any other Cause, than to the *Want* of that *Religious Instruction* and *Education*, which would at once both have better taught them their Duty, and have more effectually disposed them to the Practice of it.

NAY but (2dly,) What if, instead of being *taught of G O D*, it has been our Misfortune to have had our Children rather *taught of the Devil*; bred up, not according to the Truth or Piety of the Gospel, but with such Principles, and in such Courses, as naturally tend to the overthrowing of both. This, I fear, has been too much our Case: And then what Wonder, if, instead of a right Knowledge of G O D, and his Religion, and a Practice agreeable thereunto; we have seen such Notions prevail, and such Wickedness committed, as could hardly have been imagined in a Christian Country.

To say nothing of those *Heretical Opinions* in Matters of Faith, which have been but too successfully propagated among us, to the Destruction of some of the most *Fundamental Articles* of it: What bold Attacks have there been made upon the whole *Gospel Revelation*? And how have we been forced to maintain the very *Truth of our Religion*, against the open Assaults of profane Scoffers against it?

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WHAT Pains, and Care, have there been employ'd, to perswade Men by Principle to become *Infidels*? And to resolve all Religion into meer *Deism*, as the only rational System for a Man of Parts to rest upon?

AND for the other Way of being *taught of GOD*, viz. by the *Grace*, and *Illumination*, of the *Holy Spirit*; what has been more expos'd as vain and ridiculous, I had almost said, and even fanatical, than to believe that any such Assistance was either needed by Men, or to be obtained of GOD?

How far we are to thank our old, inveterate Enemies, the *Papists*, for this deplorable Corruption both of Principles and Morals, which, but a few Years since, too far prevailed among us; can be doubted by no one, who considers, what Countenance it received, and what Encouragement it met with, from some of the highest Rank, and most dangerous Example: Who, after having spent their whole Lives in the most detestable Hypocrisy, were at last discovered to have been all the while the secret Friends of, if not Managers for, that Party, in Opposition to the true Religion, and Worship of GOD, so wonderfully Restored, and again Establish'd among us. And sure then it ought not to be any Prejudice to the Benefit of that *good Instruction*, and *pious Education*, in the true Doctrine of CHRIST, of which I am now speaking; that by the secret Artifice of Men, perhaps of *no Religion at all*; of *Deists*, *Socinians*, *Papists*, and the like *Hereticks*; too many among us have been drawn aside from the Faith of the Gospel, and lived unworthily of that holy Name by which they were called.

BUT, (3 dly,) and to come yet more directly up to the Point in Hand: It is not pretended, that the *best Instruction* in the World will always attain its End;

nor ought it therefore to be any *Exception* against the *Benefit* of such an *Instruction*, if it sometimes chances to miss of it.

GOD has given to Mankind a *Freedom of Will*, and He deals with us upon the Supposition of it. He has endued us with *Reason* to discern between *Good* and *Evil*: He has imprinted upon our Minds the *natural Notions* of both; and by the *Revelation* of the *Gospel*, has yet more fully instructed us in the Knowledge of our Duty. There He has shewn us what is Fit, and Right; and what He requires us both to Believe and Do, in order to our Salvation. And the more to dispose us to believe, and do accordingly, He has therein further revealed to us a clear Account of our future State; and what He has prepared for us in the other World, according as we shall be careful, or not, to live so as He requires of us in this.

To assist us in our Duty, and encourage us to set our selves the more vigorously to the Practice of it; He has not only promised us the Forgiveness of our Sins through the Merits of his Son; whom He for that End chiefly sent into the World, that He might make a Propitiation for them, 1 Joh. iv. 10. but has moreover provided a Remedy for the Weakness, and Corruption, of our very Nature; and to enable us so to repent, and live, that we may be saved. He has given us his Holy Spirit, to sanctify our Hearts; to illuminate our Understandings; to strengthen us against Temptation; and both to dispose, and assist us, to fulfil whatsoever He has thought fit to require of us in order to our Salvation.

BUT still GOD forces no Man's Will: He constrains no one either to believe in, or to serve Him, whether he will or no. He has done all that was needful either

to justify Himself, or to save us. He has shewn us what our Duty is; He has set before us the strongest Motives, that is was possible to offer rational Creatures, to engage us to fulfil it; and He has promised us the greatest Assistances to enable us so to do. And it cannot be doubted but that it must be of the utmost Advantage to any one to be thoroughly instructed in, and convinced of, all this. To be possess'd with a hearty Sense of the Goodness and Mercy of GOD; of the Love and Satisfaction of CHRIST; of the great and un-conceivable Happiness of Living well; and of the extreme Peril of doing Otherwise. But if, after all, Men will be brutish and wicked; if they either will not consider their Duty and their Interest, or will resolve to perish in Opposition to both; they have their Liberty; they may do as they please. Nor will this prove any thing more, than that such Persons will have acted as unreasonably, as they have done wickedly: And must expect to suffer by so much the greater Damnation, by how much the more they have rejected the best Means, and most endearing, as well as most powerful Motives, and Assistances, to bring them to Salvation.

THE Sum then of this whole Matter is this: That to be *taught of GOD*; to be instructed in the true Knowledge and Service of GOD, and of the great Obligations which lie upon us to worship and obey Him as we ought to do; is one of the highest Privileges and Advantages, that any one can be intitled to in this World. It is the best, and most likely Means, to bring us to a Life of Holiness here; and, in Consequence thereof, to eternal Happiness hereafter. And when to this natural Tendency of our being *taught of GOD*, we shall add what is farther comprehended in the spiritual

Meaning of that Expression; and does, by the Blessing of GOD, constantly accompany this Instruction now, under the *Gospel Dispensation*; namely, that we are hereby assured of the *Grace* of the *Holy Spirit*, to enlighten us in the Knowledge, to confirm us in the Belief, and to assist us in the Performance of what we are taught; so that it must be our own Fault if we do not, every one of us, attain to the End of our *Instruction*, the Salvation of our Souls, by it: I will venture to conclude, which was *my first Observation*, That howsoever some may, in despite of these Assistances, miscarry at the last; yet this will not hinder but that the *Advantage* of a *Religious Education and Instruction*, ought nevertheless to be accounted a very *singular Blessing* to any People; and to be proportionably esteemed, and encouraged, by them.

How far this may be affirmed to be our Own Case in particular; if in such an Assembly as this, where we have before our Eyes such a numerous Appearance of our *Children*, all thus taught of GOD, it can be doubted of, I shall enquire hereafter. In the mean Time, having now, I hope, sufficiently established my former *Observation*, of the great *Benefit* of a good and pious Education, (the most proper Subject, as well as the most seasonable Improvement of our present Assembling) I proceed more briefly to consider;

II dly, WHAT our *Text* encourages us to expect, as the Consequence of such an Instruction; namely, the *Blessing* of that *Church*, and *People*, in which it is duly cultivated and improved: *Great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

AND

AND here if we shall, in the first Place, apply this Promise to the *Persons themselves*, who are so taught of GOD, as I have before shewn; that is to say, instructed in the Knowledge of the true Religion, and bred up to the Practice of a holy Life; it cannot be doubted, but that great indeed *must be the Peace of such Persons*: Who trusting in GOD, and being acquitted by their own Consciences, and justified by the *Holy Spirit, bearing Witness with their Spirits, that they are the Children of GOD, and Heirs of his Promises*, Rom. viii. 16, 17. must needs enjoy such an inward Comfort, and Peace, within themselves, *as passes all Understanding*; and may suffice to render all outward Estates not only tolerable, but easie, to them. This, as it is the peculiar Blessing, and Privilege, of such Persons; so does it abundantly make good the Promise of the *Text*, in its utmost Import, to them: And should engage us all both to desire and endeavour to be thus taught of GOD, that so we may attain that blessed Peace of Mind and Conscience, which will evermore be the Result of it.

BUT I may venture to carry this *Promise* yet farther; and to affirm, that not only they who are thus taught by GOD's Word and Spirit, shall gain such an inward Peace to themselves by it; but that such a Religious Instruction will also be very likely to promote the publick Peace and Happiness of that Church and Country, in which it is generally countenanced and encouraged: And that it should therefore be the Wisdom, as it is certainly the Duty, of all Christian Princes and States, to procure such an Instruction of all their People.

THIS, I am sure, must have been the Opinion of those Enemies of Religion, who would perswade us, that the whole Foundation of it is to be ascribed to the

Cunning and Policy of those, who first undertook to unite Men into the Bands of Civil Society; and thought it necessary, for the better Accomplishment of this End, to propagate a Belief of GOD, and the Fear of his Judgments, among the People: And is confirmed to us by the Authority of *Solomon*, one of the wisest Princes that ever sat upon any Throne, *Prov. xiv. 34. that Righteousness exalteth a Nation; but Sin is the Reproach of any People.* It lessens, and diminishes it; so the LXX translate it: Makes it wretched and miserable, so the vulgar *Latin*: And whosoever shall consider, either the * *Natural Tendency of Religious Instruction, to promote the Ends of publick Peace and Prosperity*; or the * *Methods of the Divine Providence towards such States and Countries, as have been the most careful to keep up the Knowledge and Worship of GOD, and a general Practice of Virtue and Piety amongst them*; will find, that nothing could have been either more justly observed by the One; or (had that been the Case) have been more wisely contrived, and invented, by the Other.

IF, *First*, we consider what is the * *Natural Tendency* of such an *Instruction*, with Regard to the *publick Welfare of any People*; it cannot be doubted, but that as hereby Mens Knowledge will be encreas'd, their Passions subdu'd, their irregular Appetites and Inclinations be corrected and restrain'd, and their good Dispositions cultivated and improved; so must they needs, upon all these Accounts, be render'd more *fit for Civil Society*; and more likely to live, and act after such a Manner as is requisite to promote the Ends of it.

SUCH an Institution, and Education, will not only cultivate Mens Minds, and regulate their Manners; but will moreover be apt to enlarge their Views, to raise a
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generous Spirit within them, and prompt them to look beyond their own private Ease, or Interest; and convince them not only of the Justice and Goodness, but of the Expediency, and even Necessity, of considering and promoting other Mens Happiness, as well as their own. It will shew them the Reasonableness of living as becomes the Members of the same Civil Society: Will make them dutiful and obedient to their Superiours; just and upright towards their Equals; loving and charitable, pitiful and compassionate, towards all Men; but especially such as shall either need, or desire, their Assistance. This will at once both dispose Men to honest Labour and Industry, and enable them to employ themselves in some useful Way, to their own, and the publick Welfare. And when to all this we shall add, that by such an early and good Instruction, Men will be taught upon sound Principles to believe, that their Duty to GOD requires them so to act, as their own Interest, and the Dictates of natural Reason, thus improved, would of themselves have prompted them to do: That not only the Peace and Happiness of this Life, depends upon the constant and conscientious Discharge of these *Social Duties*, but that they are equally concern'd to perform them, in order to their obtaining the Reward of the Other: Either it must be said, that the careful, and regular, Exercise and Observation of these, and the like Vertues, does not tend to promote the Peace, and Well-Government, of any People; (or because that cannot be deny'd) it must be granted, that where such a *good Instruction*, and *Education*, is generally encouraged, and provided for, in any State or Country, it will be likely to have such a happy Effect, as I am now speaking of, to procure the publick Safety and Welfare of it.

AND

AND for what concerns the * *Providence of GOD* towards such a People ; if we may be permitted, either from the *Experience of what has been the usual Method of that*, in all Places, to conclude *what we may reasonably hope shall continue to be the Effect of it* ; or may be allow'd to argue upon such *Principles*, as not only seem to give the *best Account of the Divine Dispensations towards Civil Societies*, but are pointed out to us by *GOD himself*, in the Holy Scriptures, as the *stated Rules and Measures of his Procedure with regard to them* : They will both furnish us with abundant Reasons to believe, that nothing can be more likely to secure the Favour of *GOD* to any People, than a general Encouragement of the Religious Instruction, and Education of all its Children will be likely to do.

FOR let us enquire now of the Ages that have been before us, and let us ask from one End of the Earth even to the other ; When did *GOD* ever give up any People to Ruine and Desolation, till their Sins and Impieties had provoked Him so to do ? Or what Accounts do the sacred Writings furnish us with of his Judgments, not only against the *Jews*, his own peculiar Inheritance, but all the other Nations round about them, but only this ; That they had *fill'd up the Measure of their Iniquities* ; and were therefore appointed by Him to Destruction, because their Wickedness had made them ripe for it.

PRIVATE Persons may live well, and yet fall under very grievous Trials, when the Wisdom, or even Goodness of *GOD*, shall make Him think it fit for them to be exercis'd by them : Because there is a Time coming, a future State, in which they shall be abundantly rewarded for their Sufferings. And, for the same Reason,

son, they may also do wickedly, and yet continue to prosper in their Ways; because they shall be call'd to account for it in the other World, and there receive the full Punishment of their Evil Doings. But this is not the Case with publick Societies: These will all be dissolv'd with this present World, and have no Continuance in the other. And therefore we may the rather conclude, That the Rewards of publick Virtue and Piety; and the Punishments of open Profaneness, Idolatry, and Impiety, generally practis'd in any Nation; and if not allow'd, yet not suppress'd as it ought to be; shall be dispens'd now, in this present Time: As GOD plainly declar'd to the *Jews*, that they should be; and as the Histories, not only of that People, but of all other States and Countries, assure us they, commonly, have been.

IF therefore the Care of instructing Persons aright, but especially of our breeding up our Children in an early Knowledge and Sense of their Duty, and to a constant Discharge of it; will be the most likely Way to promote the Service of GOD, and the Practice of true Religion, and Piety, in any Nation; as it cannot be doubted but that it will: We may then, upon all these Accounts, have good Reason to conclude, (which was my *Second Observation*) That it will also thereby contribute to the *publick Peace and Prosperity of every such People*; and that where the one is carefully done, the other will generally be found to be the Effect of it.

AND here then let us stop, and enquire, What our *own Condition* is with Respect to the *former of these*; that so we may be able the better to judge what we have to *hope for* as to the *latter*.

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AND indeed I think I may venture to say, that if ever any People might justly flatter themselves, that *All their Children were taught of GOD*; we of this Church and Nation may, upon the surest Grounds, presume so to do.

To pass by the many other Instances of the Improvements which have been made, within these few Years last past, of Religious Instruction, and the Service of GOD, among us: * Our frequent Communions; * our publick Invitations to them, and Preparations for them; * our Daily Prayers; * our constant Catechizings: And all these carefully attended upon by the greatest Number of pious, and well-disposed Christians, that perhaps has ever been known in any Age.

To say nothing of that, which nevertheless can never be mention'd without the utmost Comfort and Satisfaction; I mean the publick Provision which has been made for the * better Support of the Establish'd Ministry at Home; and for the * Planting of Churches and Ministers, where, till now, never any were sent or settled Abroad: And both these for the same End, of a more perfect Instruction of the People in their Duty to GOD; and the better to assist them in the Performance of it.

To omit, *Lastly*, the mention of those voluntary Societies, which have been form'd for the very Purpose of what I am now speaking; viz. for the * Propagating of Christian Knowledge; and for the Improvement of that Knowledge by the * Reformation of Manners, and the careful Suppression of all open Vice and Immorality: And these also both approv'd of, and countenanc'd by, publick Authority.

Who can behold this present Assembly, and see here so many Thousands of poor Children, *All taught of GOD*;

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instructed upon Charity, the Gift and Work of GOD; and bred up to the Knowledge and Service of GOD, through JESUS CHRIST; and then consider what Multitudes of other poor Children are instructed upon the like Charity, in the same Principles of Truth and Piety, in all the other Parts of this Kingdom; and not be forc'd to confess that we are, in this Respect, *a wise and understanding People*: And that never any Nation, either had the LORD their GOD better known, or his Commandments more carefully inculcated upon the Minds and Hearts of all its Children, than our Nation has at this Day.

BUT I must not stop here: Our Children are not only thus early, and carefully, *instructed* in their Duty; but that they may be also *taught of GOD*, in the other, and more spiritual, Meaning of that Expression; they are train'd up in the *Practice of that Piety* in which they are *instructed*; and are at once both inform'd what they ought to do, and accusom'd to the doing of it.

How great the Benefit of such an early *Habit of Virtue and Piety*, settled and rooted in them, may be likely to prove to them in all the following Course of their Lives, I shall not need to say. Every one knows how much easier it is to prevent evil Habits, than to break them: And if any thing in the World can make Men firmly Good, this must be the Way; We must *train up our Youth in the Course they ought to take*, and then we may hope *that when they are Old, they will not depart from it*, Prov. xxii. 6.

NOR is it any small Benefit to the Security of our Children in their Good way, that they are not only thus instructed in the Knowledge of their Duty, and the Obligations which lie upon them to fulfil it, and accustomed

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270 *The Excellency, and Benefits,*

from the Beginning so to do ; but are moreover bred up to *Labour* and *Industry* ; are used to be *Honestly* and *Diligently* employ'd : And are thereby freed from those *Temptations* which *Idleness* alone, without any other Incentive, is but too apt to minister to most Men.

By this they are delivered from another Danger, and yet stronger Temptation to Sin, that of *Want* and *Laziness* : Whilst being accustomed to a Life of Labour and Diligence, they have neither Leisure to contrive, nor Opportunity to execute, nor Occasion to recur, to any wicked and unlawful Means of providing for their Necessities ; which their constant Industry in that good, and honest Way, in which they are here brought up, sufficiently prevents.

Thus are these *Poor Children*, in every Respect, *taught of GOD* : For we cannot doubt but that where such good Care is taken of their outward Instruction, and Conduct ; GOD will never be wanting to make it perfect, by the inward Sanctification, and Grace, of his *Holy Spirit*. How our *Other Children* are provided for in this Respect, I shall not need to say. The Multitude of our *Publick Schools*, many of them plentifully Endow'd for this very Purpose, in all the Parts of the Realm : The Number and Greatness of our *Colleges* in our Two famous *Universities* ; such as no other Nation in the World can boast of : And that unusual Concern which the Example of these poor Childrens Education has raised in those of better Abilities, for the good Instruction of their own, beyond what was ever known in former Times, sufficiently speak it to us : And may altogether encourage us to hope, that as no People ever took more, or greater Care, to have *All their Children taught of GOD* ; so we shall also, in due Time, reap the consequent

quent *Blessing* of it, mentioned in the *Text*; and that *Great shall be the Peace of our Children.*

AND indeed he must have been a very careless Observer of the *Providential Dispensations of GOD towards this Church and Nation*, since the Time that this Improvement of Religious Instruction began to be revived among us, who has not already remarked somewhat very extraordinary in them; which cannot be imputed to any Thing so properly, as to the Blessing of GOD upon this Great Work.

SCARCE was the † Foundation of this Discipline laid in the Neighbouring City; but our *Fears of Popery*, and of that *Ruine* of our *Laws and Liberties*, as well as our *Religion*, with which we were at that Time eminently threatned, began to be wonderfully allay'd, by a *REVOLUTION*, which I may truly say was almost intirely owing to our Peoples being *taught of GOD*. Every one knows how much the Zeal and Diligence of our *CLERGY* in those Days, by *Writing, Preaching, and Disputing*; in Public and in Private; against the *Tyranny, Superstition, and Idolatry* of the *CHURCH of ROME*, contributed not only to the settling of the Nation in a true Knowledge, and a just Esteem, of their *Reformed Religion and Worship*; but to raise that *Noble Spirit* which then so universally shew'd its self in all Orders of Men among us; and made them resolve not to part with their *Religion, or Liberties*, but with their *Lives*. We saw the whole Kingdom stand up as one Man in Defence of Both: And the Result was, that GOD sent us such a Deliverance at Home, and supported us with such an Alliance Abroad, as not only astonished

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† By the present Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in his *Two Schools* at *St. Martin's* and *St. James's Westminster*.

our Enemies, but even surprized our own Selves. It was with us then, as it had been with the *Jews* heretofore: Psal. cxxvi. 1. *When GOD turned the Captivity of Sion, they were like to Men that dream*; And so were we. We were sav'd, before we could believe that we were in Safety. We were delivered from the utmost Danger; and it was in such a wonderful Manner, that we could scarce think that we were so.

How it has pleased GOD to bless and preserve us, since that Time, (the very *Period* from which we must compute the Care of this *good Instruction*, too fatally, alas! neglected before :) In how many Dangers, and from how many Devices, He has delivered us; not only of our open Enemies, but of a secret, disaffected Party, lurking within our own Bosom, and projecting our Ruine, in Despight of all that GOD had done to prevent it; it would be too long for me particularly to observe. To summ up all in one Word: GOD has saved our *Religion*, our *Laws*, our *Liberties*, our *Property*, nay and our very *Lives*, when they were all of them in the utmost Peril. He has Establish'd us upon that Bottom which our *Glorious Deliverer* King *WILLIAM*, and our late *Royal Sovereign* Queen *ANNE*, justly look'd upon as our *only Security*, against the like Dangers for the Time to come. He has brought that *Great and Necessary SETTLEMENT* to bear; And placed a *ROYAL FAMILY* upon the Throne, under which we have all the Reason in the World to promise our selves a lasting Peace and Establishment. And though we have still our *Ammonites*, and *Nehem. iv. 7.* *Arabians* without, and their Confederates *Compar. with* within, conspiring together, and labouring *Chap. vi. 17,* incessantly against our Peace; as those *18.* Enemies of the *Jews*, pursuant to the *Prophecy* before *us,*

us, did against theirs; yet may we justly hope that, by the Blessing of GOD, they shall meet with the same Disappointment in the End: *Isa. liv. 15. Behold they shall gather together, but not of me; Whosoever shall gather together against Thee shall fall for thy Sake. No Weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Ver. 17. And every Tongue that shall rise against Thee in Judgment, shalt thou condemn.*

PERMIT me only, for the better Improvement of what hath been said; and that we may ascertain this Blessing of GOD to our Selves, and our Posterity, to offer you a Reflection or two, with particular Regard to *the Design of our present Assembling*, and I shall have done.

AND, 1st, We may from hence see, How much it will concern us to use our utmost Endeavours to *encourage this Charity*; and if it were possible to bring it to such a Perfection, that there might not be one un-tutor'd Person remaining in our Land: And to *transmit it to those who shall come after us*, as the surest Preservative of the publick Peace and Tranquillity; the Earnest of GOD's Favour and Protection, to our Church and Country, in all succeeding Generations.

I shall not here trouble you with any Repetition of what I have before said, to shew either the *Natural Tendency* of such a Religious Education of all our Children, to the Prosperity of our Country; or the just Reason we may have to promise our selves the *peculiar Blessing and Favour of GOD from it*. But surely that *Charity* which so directly tends, not only to the private Welfare and Happiness of those who partake of it; (and that both of Soul and Body; for this Life, and for the other;) but is, at the same Time, so fruitful of publick Blessings also; and promises such a plentiful Return

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of Peace and Unity, of Religion and Piety, of all those other Vertues and Qualifications which may be likely to render any People Quiet and Prosperous at Home, and Formidable Abroad; and all this accompanied with the special Favour and Protection of the Divine Providence over them for Good: I say, such a *Charity*, as it must highly deserve, so, one would hope, it should not fail to meet with a very particular Encouragement from all good Men; And to be carried on with a Zeal in some Measure suitable both to those Benefits we have already received, and to those farther Blessings we have all imaginable Reason to believe will continue to follow both to our Selves, and our Posterity, from it.

AND Blessed be GOD! who hath put it into your Hearts to promote this Charity in such a Manner as is beyond the Example of any other Country, and was never known till this present Time in our Own. May your Care and Diligence in this good Work abound more and more! And what *David* heretofore begg'd of GOD, as the peculiar Blessing of his Reign, be fully accomplish'd in that of our own most gracious Sovereign, Psal. cxliv. 12. *That our Sons may be as Plants grown up in their Youth; our Daughters as Corner Stones polished after the Similitude of a Palace.* Ver. 13. *Our Garners full, affording all Manner of Store; Our Sheep bring forth Thousands, and Ten Thousands in our Streets.* Ver. 14. *That our Oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no Breaking in, no Going out, nor any Complaining in our Streets.* Ver. 15. *Happy the People that is in such a Case! Happy that People whose GOD is the LORD!* But,

2dly, THAT this Charity may be as wisely managed to the obtaining of these Blessings, as it is justly to be hoped

hoped it shall continue to be highly *Encouraged* by all of us in order thereunto ; it should be the special Care of all those who are concern'd in the *Direction* of any of these *Schools*, to see that our *poor Children* be duly *Bred up* in them, to *answer the Ends of their Institution*.

Now those I take to be especially these Three : *Christian Knowledge* ; a *Religious Practice* ; and a *Useful Industry*. By the *first* of which, a good Foundation will be laid of Vertue and Piety in their Minds : By the *Second*, they will attain to the habitual Discharge of it : And by the *Third*, will be secured against the Dangers and Temptations which always attend an idle Course of Life ; and, if not prevented, will be likely to render the best Education vain and of no Effect.

H E R E therefore, as I trust there is, so I think there should be, the utmost Care taken, to see that these poor Children be put into the Hands of Masters and Mistresses, duly qualified to promote these Purposes. That they be Persons capable of instructing them in all these Ways : And such as by their good Examples, no less than by their careful Attendance upon the Charge committed to them, will both inform them aright how they ought to walk ; and see that they do frame their Lives and Manners agreeably thereunto.

To both which let me add, 3 dly, and *Lastly* ; That in the Management of this *Charity*, all *Party*, and *Faction*, and whatsoever else may tend to make any *Distinction*, or *Division*, either among the *Directors* of it, or *Contributors* to it, be utterly laid aside : As that which, if ever it be admitted, will tend to the Ruin of this *Work*, and *Labour of Love* ; and which nothing but *Love*, and *Peace*, and *Unity*, and *Charity*, can effectually promote, and establish among us.

IT is a Misfortune never to be sufficiently lamented by all who wish well either to the Glory of GOD, the Peace of their Country, or the Interests of the Church by Law Establish'd, (and which, as it the best deserves, so we hope it shall always continue to be the most carefully supported by all of us;) that there should be any such Thing as *Party*, or *Division*, among us. That a *Church* so wisely Reformed, and so happily Constituted, both in its Worship, Doctrine, and Government, as the *Church* of *England* apparently is, should have any to take Offence at her Orders, or to separate from her Communion. That a Government so prudently contrived, and so admirably tempered, that as the *King* wants no *Power* which a good Prince would desire; so neither does any *People* under Heaven enjoy its *Liberty*, either in so full a Manner, or upon so firm a Security, as We of this Nation do; and the Administration whereof is now in the Hands of a *Monarch*, as Able, as He is Desirous, to Protect and Defend us; should yet meet with such unreasonable Oppositions, through the various Interests and Designs of cunning and disaffected Persons; that it even amazes one to think what shall be the End of our Sin, and Ingratitude.

BUT whatever Differences we may chance to have amongst us as to other Matters, let nothing of this unhappy Nature enter into the Management of this *Charity*, which we are now Assembled together, with one Accord, to recommend to the Favour both of GOD and Man. This is properly a *Work of Love*: O let it be carried on with the most *united Affections*! That so, if it be the Will of GOD, it may be a Means of promoting a more general Union of Hearts and Affections among All of Us: Such a Love as becomes
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those who are *Members*, not only of the same *Civil Society*, but of the same *Church* too; and should therefore, according to St. Paul's arguing, *Ephes. iv. 3. Endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

I need not say how directly this *Charity* tends to promote our Unity in One of these, Our *Church Communion*; by bringing up our Children, from the Beginning, in the same *Doctrine* and *Worship*: And in the *Knowledge* and *Love* of our *Established Church*; which needs only to be known, that it may also be loved, by all wise and good Christians.

AND for the Other, methinks our very joining together in such a Work as this, should dispose us to a like Union in whatever else may concern our *Publick Welfare*. To think the most kindly and charitably of one another: To be ready to promote *the Peace of our Jerusalem*; and not suffer our Enemies to keep up such a Diversity of Parties and Interests among us, as however they may serve our private Purposes for the present, yet can tend to nothing but our common Ruin and Confusion in the End.

O that this might be another happy Effect of this excellent *Charity*! That it might incline us to, if not work in us all, such a Christian Temper and Disposition towards each other!

WHAT a blessed Addition would this make to the other great, and noble Benefits of this pious Undertaking? What a present Comfort, as well as certain Expectation of many future Blessings to proceed from it, would it minister to us, to recompence all our Labours and Expences, in the Pursuit of it?

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MAY the GOD of Peace inspire every one of us with an ardent Desire, a holy Purpose and Resolution of Mind, to make this farther Improvement of the present *Charity*! This would render both our Selves, and our Offerings, yet more acceptable to GOD, and profitable to our Country. It would give the finishing Stroke, the highest Perfection, to this good Undertaking: And shew us to be indeed the Disciples of a Saviour, who *so loved us, as to lay down his Own Life for our Sakes*, 1 Joh. iii. 16. And who, in Return, has both required, and exhorted Us, in like manner *to love one another; as I have loved you*, says He, John xiii. 34, 35. *that ye also love one another.*

Philip. ii. 1. *If there be then any Consolation in CHRIST: If any Comfort of Love: If any Fellowship of the Spirit: If any Bowels and Mercy: Fulfil ye my Joy; (nay, rather your own Joy; the exceeding great and unspeakable Joy of all the true Followers of the Blessed JESUS;) That ye be like-minded; having the same Love, being of one Accord, of one Mind.*

And the Peace of GOD, which passeth all Understanding, keep your Hearts and Minds thro' CHRIST JESUS our LORD, Phil. iv. 7. To Him, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be Honour and Praise, now and for ever. Amen.





A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

MAY 24. 1716.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By EDMUND, Lord Bishop of LINCOLN.

DANIEL XII. 3.

And they that be wise, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.



HIS and the foregoing Verse are generally interpreted in the same Way, as the Passages in the New Testament concerning CHRIST'S Coming to Judgment: many of which do *immediately* relate to the Destruction that he would send upon *Jerusalem* and the Nation of the *Jews*; but are expressed withal under such Circumstances,

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cumstances, as evidently look forward to the *general Judgment* of the World. In like Manner, this Prophecy of *Daniel*, concerning the *awaking of those who then slept in the Dust of the Earth*, ver. 2. is supposed to have an immediate Eye to the approaching Deliverance, and as it were the Revival or Resurrection of the *Jewish Nation*, by the Death of *Antiochus*, out of that low and miserable State into which they were then sunk ; not improperly compar'd to being *bury'd in the Dust of the Earth*. But at the same Time, it is very evident, that some of the Expressions in this Passage can relate to no other Resurrection, but that of the last Day ; *Many of them that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake ; some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt* : which cannot, strictly speaking, be confin'd to that Deliverance of the *Jews* out of their persecuted State ; because, upon the Death of *Antiochus*, all in general, and without Distinction, were to rise up into a prosperous and flourishing Condition, and none of them to Shame, or Contempt.

AND this Distinction of the Condition of Men in the next World, according to their Behaviour in this, (*some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt*) is not only applicable to the Judgment of the last Day ; but it is the very Description which the Gospel gives us of the Case of good and bad Men at the general Resurrection ; *These* (says our Saviour, *Matt. xxv. 42.*) *shall go away into Everlasting Punishment ; but the Righteous into Life eternal*. And the Prophet having assign'd in the 2^d Verse the different Portions of the Righteous and the Wicked, at the Day of Retribution ; adds in the 3^d Verse, (the Verse which I have chosen for my Text) that as to the *Measures and*
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Degrees of Glory in the next World, there will be also some Difference and Distinction among those who shall be rais'd to everlasting Life ; and particularly, that they who have made it their Business to instruct others in their Duty, and have been Instruments, in the Hands of G O D, to turn Mankind into the Paths of Righteousness, shall be distinguish'd at that Day by a more eminent Degree of Glory, and shall be known by a peculiar Brightness and Lustre, like the Stars in the Firmament of Heaven. *They that be wise, or as it is render'd in the Margin, they that be Teachers, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament ; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

FROM which Words, I will discourse at this Time upon two Heads :

First, T H E Persons, to whom this distinguishing Reward or Glory in the next World is promis'd ; and they are such as apply themselves to the most probable and effectual Methods, of instructing Mankind in their Duty, and turning them into the Paths of Righteousness ; or, as the Text describes them, they are *Teachers, and such as turn many to Righteousness.*

Secondly, T H E particular Excellencies of this Work of training up Mankind to the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty ; which Excellencies do entitle it to such a *great and exceeding* Reward from the Hands of G O D.

First then, Who are the Persons to whom this distinguishing Reward and Glory in the next World is promis'd ? They are those in general, who apply themselves to the most probable and effectual Methods, of instructing Mankind in their Duty, and turning them into the
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Paths of Righteousness. The Text describes them, *First*, under the Name of *Wise*, or *Teachers*, they who have instructed themselves in the Laws of GOD, and make it their Business to see others instructed: A Work, which belongs more eminently to the Ministers of JESUS CHRIST, as an Order of Men specially sent and appointed by him for the perpetual Instruction and Edification of his Church; to preach the sincere Word of GOD, to explain and enforce the particular Duties of the Christian Life, to instruct the Ignorant, confirm the Weak, and convince Gain-sayers; and in short, to set the Principles and Doctrines of Christianity in such a clear Light, as may dispel the Clouds of Ignorance, and deliver their Hearers from all Doubts and Errors, whether in Faith or Practice.

BUT altho' this Work, as I said, belongs in a more peculiar Manner to the Ministers of JESUS CHRIST, as specially instituted and appointed for that End; it is to be consider'd, that *their* Teaching is chiefly directed to those, who are arriv'd to Years of Reason and Understanding, and bring with them a competent Knowledge of the general Principles of Religion; and where there is not such a *Preparatory* Knowledge, it may truly be said in the Words of the Apostle, that their *Hearing is vain, and our Preaching is vain also*. Now, in the ordinary Course and Nature of Things, it is next to impossible for *Ministers*, especially in large and populous *Parishes*, to carry on these necessary Preparations; because they, in whom they are to be wrought, are yet Children in Age and Understanding; into whose Minds these Instructions must be infused by little and little, as their narrow Capacities are able to receive them; and from the light and unsettled Fancies of Children, no
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Degrees of Application are to be hop'd, but what are owing to the *constant Attendance* of their Teachers, and the Order and Government of the Places where they are taught. These are, our publick Schools of Education; where Children, with their other Attainments, are best instructed in the Principles of Religion; and where they are prepar'd to go on to further Degrees of Knowledge, by being made capable to read and hear Religious Discourses, with Delight and Profit.

AND this is not only one Branch of Teaching within the Meaning and Intention of the Text, but however small in it self, is in the Effects a very *important* Branch, as it is the Foundation of their future Improvements, and that without which no future Improvements at all would ordinarily be made. And proportionable to the Necessity and Importance of this Work, is the Merit and Reward of all those who labour about it, and study to promote it; those who give up their whole Time to that laborious, but very useful Employment; and those who contribute to their Support and Encouragement, according to the Abilities with which GOD hath blessed them; especially when such Pains and Contributions are laid out, in providing Instruction for those, who, by Reason of the Narrowness of their Fortunes, must otherwise have grown up in utter Ignorance of their Duty.

2. ANOTHER Sort of Persons, to whom the Text ensures this distinguishing Reward and Glory in the next World, are they who turn many to Righteousness; *They that be Wise, or the Teachers, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And this Work, as that other of Teaching, principally belongs

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longs to the Ministers of the Gospel; who have a Command and Authority from JESUS CHRIST, not only to be the Overseers of their several Flocks, and to explain to them the general Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel, and to warn obstinate Sinners of the Danger of their Ways; but also, as they find Occasion, and where general Exhortations and Warnings have no Effect, to rebuke, reprove, and admonish, with all Freedom and Boldness, and to make Head against every Sin that shall exalt it self against GOD and his Laws; as those who are to give an Account of the Souls committed to their Care. And towards this Work of turning Sinners into the Paths of Righteousness, great Service may be done, great Assistance receiv'd, from a due Exercise of the Authority of Parents over their Children, of Masters over their Servants, and of Magistrates over all; who *are the Ministers of GOD* in their several Stations, *to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil*; and by faithfully employing the Power which GOD has entrusted with them for that End, may contribute a great deal towards the Reformation of Mankind, and secure to themselves that distinguishing Reward in the next World, which the Text appropriates to those who in this World have been the Instruments of *turning many to Righteousness*.

BUT there is another Way of delivering Mankind from Sin and Vice, which is also naturally comprehended under this Phrase of *turning many to Righteousness*; and that is, the bending the Minds of Children, while they are tender and pliable, and are not yet infected with Habits of Vice, to the Ways of Goodness and Righteousness. Reproofs and Admonitions to turn Men from their wicked Ways, are the Application of a Remedy

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to an inveterate Disease; but to turn the Minds and Inclinations of *Children* into the right Way at first, this is to foresee and prevent the Disease it self. It is to write and imprint the Laws of GOD upon the Tables of their Hearts, while they are yet white and clean, not fully'd by any Filth or Pollution contracted by sinful Courses; while they are in a good Measure Strangers to the Vices of the World, and by such an early Prepossession of Virtue and Goodness, are put into the surest Way to be Proof against them as long as they live. But now, the Actions and Dispositions of Children do not ordinarily fall within the Knowledge of Civil Magistrates or Spiritual Pastors, especially, as I said before, in *Parishes* that are large and populous; Where therefore the right forming of the Minds of Children, and the turning them into the right Way, must chiefly depend upon the Observation of Parents, and the Watchfulness of those to whom they commit the Care of their Education. But what then shall become of those unhappy Children, whose Parents are taken away, or their Circumstances too mean and narrow to furnish out either Education or Calling? They are sent into the wide World, without Restraint and without Employment; and being left to themselves, it is easily foreseen into what Way the Corruption of Nature, and the Example of a wicked World, will quickly turn them. And without doubt, the greater their Danger is under such unhappy Circumstances, the more worthy and seasonable is that Charity which works their Deliverance, by providing them a good Education, as a Step to some honest and useful Calling; that is, by first turning them *into* the Way of Righteousness, and then, under the Influence of GOD's Grace, preserving and fixing them *in* that Way.

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AND this brings me to the Second general Head, *viz.*

II. THE particular Excellencies of training up Mankind to the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty ; on Account of which Excellencies it is entitled to such a *high* and *distinguishing* Reward from the Hands of God. And in discoursing of the Excellencies of this Work, I shall have a more particular Eye to the Case before us, the Care that is taken, and the Contributions that are made, by pious and good Christians, for the Instruction and Education of the poorer Sort of Children. Which is a Work more peculiarly acceptable to God.

1. As it is Charity.
2. As it is Charity to the Soul.
3. As it is a Charity proceeding from the noblest Motives.
4. As it is a Charity employ'd to the best Advantage.
5. As it is a Charity, extending not only to the present Age, but also to Posterity.

I. THIS Work is a Work of Charity ; carrying in it a general Love to Mankind, and a Desire to see every one happy and comfortable ; a Disposition, that sets Men above that mean and low Principle, of not caring what becomes of the rest of Mankind, if themselves can be quiet and easie ; a Disposition, which prompts Men to a Concern for their Neighbours, to lay their Wants and Miseries to Heart, and to contrive and pursue the most effectual Methods, to make their Condition in the World as easy and prosperous as we can. This is a *Godlike* Disposition, and in the strictest Sense an Imitation of God, whose Care is over the whole Creation, and whose Goodness and Providence are perpetually working for the Comfort and Benefit of his
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Creatures. On which Account, every Instance of Concern for the Welfare and Happiness of Mankind, is properly the carrying on of GOD's Work; and every charitable Disposition in Man, is a happy Instrument in the Hands of GOD, to convey Comfort and Assistance to his Creatures. And the Argument whereby our Saviour recommends to Christians this Spirit of Pity and Compassion, is, that it makes Men *like to God*, *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful*, Luke vi. 36. and that it is a most effectual Way to obtain Favour and Mercy from GOD, *Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy*: this (as the Apostle plainly implies) being a *Sacrifice with which GOD is more particularly pleas'd*, Heb. xiii. 2. Inasmuch, that whatever is laid out in Charity, GOD accounts an Offering and a Loan to himself; and accordingly he engages to repay it, *He who hath Pity on the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again*, Prov. xxii. 9. And that this Payment is chiefly in the next World, is the plain Language of Holy Scripture; which calls every charitable Contribution to the Necessities of the Poor upon Earth, the *laying up a Treasure in Heaven*, and the *laying up in Store for our selves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal Life*, 1 Tim. vi. 19. And we have our Saviour's Word for it, that for every good Office we do, to those who are not able to recompence us, *we shall be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just*, Luke xiv. 14. when the chief Enquiry is to be, who they are, that have *fed the Hungry, and cloath'd the Naked*; and when the Judge of the World will make an open and solemn Declaration, that whatever in that Way has been done for
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the meanest Creature upon Earth, he accepts and rewards as done to himself; *Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*, Matt. xxv. 40.

Where our Saviour represents the Poor as standing by, while the Rich are making up their Accounts, like so many Witnesses in the Presence of CHRIST, to the good Works of them, from whose Hands they had receiv'd Succour and Relief in this World. Of so great Value are Works of Charity in the Eyes of GOD, and so great is the Reward which belongs to them in the next World: and this, to Charity of all Kinds whatsoever, as carrying in it that Godlike Disposition, of loving to do good, and being touch'd with a feeling of others Mens Wants and Miseries, and desiring to see all Mankind as happy and comfortable as our selves. But the Value of that Charity, which is our present Subject, is heighten'd by this peculiar Circumstance, That,

2^{dly}, It is a Charity to the *Soul*. It does not only furnish many poor Children, who must otherwise have liv'd in Beggary and Contempt, with such Knowledge and Advantages as prepare them to live comfortably upon an honest Calling; but, which is more, it furnishes their Souls with an early Knowledge of their Duty to GOD, and is the Means to inure them from the Beginning to a Habit of regular and orderly Living, and to plant in them such a Sense of Religion and Conscience as may carry them safe through the Temptations of a wicked World. And all this, at an Age, which, without such Discipline and Instruction, would almost unavoidably fall into Idleness, and Lying, and Theft, and all the vile Arts and Habits that are usually seen in that loose and strolling Life, without Subsistence and with-

without Employment. By which Means, there is perpetually growing up among us, not only an useless, but what comes more directly under our present Consideration, a lewd, wicked, and profligate Race, void of all Knowledge, and Sense of Duty, and utter Strangers to the Service and Worship of G O D. This is a great Evil, in many Respects; but in none so great and deplorable, as is the perishing of so many Souls, for Want of Instruction and Discipline; which, by a little charitable Assistance at the Beginning, to season their tender Years with wholsom Instruction and good Impressions, might have deliver'd their Souls from Destruction, and made them eternally happy. We are apt to be mov'd with Compassion, at the Sight of Cold, and Hunger, and Nakedness (and it would be great Cruelty, not to be mov'd); but there is no Sight so truly pitiable, as Youth growing up in Ignorance and Idleness; as this is the high Way to Wickedness and Debauchery, and these the certain and unavoidable Ruin of their Souls. Now, the more valuable a Soul is, (for in Respect of the Soul, the Rich and Poor are all equal) the higher must that Charity be, which extends its Care to it, and is employ'd in its Salvation; in delivering it, not only from *temporal* Pain and Disquiet (which will quickly have an End), but what is the great Consideration of all, in delivering it from *everlasting* Torment. And the more fatal to such poor Souls the Want of Discipline and Instruction usually is, the more valuable must that Charity be which supplies it, in the Account of the great Judge of Quick and Dead, who came down from Heaven to save Souls, and to teach and instruct the Poor and Ignorant, and to *seek and to save that which was lost.* And the

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same ought to be the Work and Employment of every Christian, according to their several Stations, Abilities and Opportunities; and, since the Erecting of Schools of Charity is one of the most effectual Ways of planting in Children the Principles of Christianity, and preserving Multitudes from Destruction, whom, humanly speaking, nothing else *could* preserve; every Instance of *Care* and *Concern*, every Mite that is cast in, for the Maintenance and Continuance of such Schools, has in it this distinguishing Value, that it is so much contributed to the saving of a Soul, and will accordingly be esteem'd in the Eyes of Almighty God, the great Lover of Souls, who is not willing *that any should perish*, but that all should come to everlasting Life.

3. ANOTHER Circumstance, which exceedingly adds to the Value of this kind of Care and Charity, is, the Motive from which it proceeds; namely, that universal Love and good Will, which is the highest Precept of the Gospel, and the peculiar Excellency of the Christian Religion. The Concern for Children and Relations, is a Principle of Nature, which usually works more or less, according to Affinity and Nearness in Blood: And tho' the Care which Parents take of the Education of their own Children, is the doing a very great Work, and a Work that ought to be done in the *first* Place; yet, at the same Time, it is a Work rather of *Justice*, than *Charity*; this being the Voice of Nature, and therefore the Doctrine of all Ages and Nations, that Children are *entitled*, in the strictest Sense, to the Care and Assistance of their Parents. For to bring poor Creatures into the World, to suffer them to be Slaves to Sin here, and consign'd

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to eternal Torments hereafter, would not only be unkind or unjust, but most cruel and unnatural. Thus far therefore Nature will carry them; and so we oft-times see great Diligence and Concern for the *Welfare* of Children, in Men who are very wicked in other Respects, and appear not to be under any Restraint, of Religion or Conscience. For (as I said) thus far *mere Nature* will go; but then, here Nature stops; and that which *enlarges* our Care and Affection beyond this, is a Relation of another Kind, namely, a Religious and Spiritual Relation; as we are all Children of the same Father, Almighty GOD; all Servants under the same Master, the Lord JESUS; all Members of the same Mystical Body of CHRIST, and *every one Members one of another*. This is that Relation which the Apostle describes (1 Cor. xii. 13.) *For by one Spirit we are all baptiz'd into one Body*; and then, at the 25th and 26th Verses, follows the proper *Effect* of this Relation, *that the Members should have the same Care one for another; and whether one Member suffer, all the Members should suffer with it*. So that the Concern which Men have for their Relations according to the Flesh, however laudable in it self, is yet too *narrow* for the Christian Religion; and between those Parents who confine their Care to their own Children, and those who to that add the Care of *others* also, as far as their Abilities will reach; between these (I say) there is the same Difference, in some Respects, that our Saviour sets between the *Jew* and *Samaritan* in the Gospel. The *Jew* had a very hearty Concern for all of his own Kindred and Nation, and for ought appears, was free and liberal when their Necessities requir'd his Assistance; and so

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far he did very well: but he fell far short of the Merit and Goodness of the *Samaritan*, who had that mighty Commendation given him by our Saviour, because, abhorring that narrow Distinction of Kindred, it appear'd that he was mov'd by a more noble Principle; that he wanted no other Argument to afford his Help, but that he saw another in Need of it. In like Manner, they who take Care of the good Education of their *own* Children or Relations, do exceeding well, and deserve great Commendation for it; and there is no doubt, but every Man's first and greatest Care, is his own Children and Family, as a Charge, which the Providence of GOD hath more immediately committed to him. But after all, it must be own'd, that in this, *Nature* has usually a great Share; and that the Charity which we are now pleading for, in Behalf of those poor Objects before us, will, in Regard of the Motives, be a *higher* Proof and Evidence of that universal Love, which the Gospel so earnestly enforces; inasmuch as all worldly Regards and Considerations apart, what is done for these, is done purely *for the Sake of CHRIST*; whose Children they are, and whose Children we show our selves to be, by such Care and Tenderness to them, as becomes the Members of the same Body, one towards another. And what Value *CHRIST* will set upon every the *least* Act of Kindness and Charity that is done to such, for his Sake, and upon his Account, we learn from his own Mouth, (*Matth. x. 42.*) *Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a Cup of cold Water, only in the Name of a Disciple; Verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.*

Fourthly,

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Fourthly, THERE is yet another Consideration, which adds greatly to the Value, and by Consequence to the Reward, of charitable Contributions in this Kind, namely, the *Application* and *Effects* of them. For tho' every Man is bound, in stating the Proportions of his Charity, to lay it out in such Measures and Degrees as GOD has bless'd him; yet does not the *Value* of Charity arise barely from the *parting* with so much, but from a probable Prospect of the Good it will do, which ought always to be one main thing in the Thought and Intention of the Giver. And perhaps there is no Kind of Charity whatever, where so little works so great Effects, as in this Way; and these Effects so certain, as very seldom to fail. If the same Contributions were employ'd in the *Maintenance* of these, without the Benefit of *Education*; it might keep them from perishing at present, but it would lay no Foundation for their future Comfort. Or, suppose the Instruction and Education of each, were to be separately provided for by the Charity of particular Persons; their doing of this in the first Place, would fall within the *Abilities* of very few; next, it would, in the whole, require much larger Supplies; and, which is most considerable in this Matter, the Children (in the Way of a private Education) would lose the many Advantages which they now receive by living under that excellent Order and Government into which they are here form'd. And upon this Account, Religion is extremely indebted to the first pious Contrivers, and the present pious Managers, of these Schools of Charity; not only as they put it in the Power of the meanest Persons to cast in their Mite, and to bear a Part in so good a Work; but as such regular Consti-

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tutions are the best Security to the *Morals* and *Virtue* of Children: At the same Time that they enrich their Minds with Christian Knowledge, they replenish their Hearts with Christian Dispositions; all the while they are *instructing* them in their Duty, they are also preparing them to *love* and *practise* it; by restraining them from youthful Follies and Excesses, in habituating them to a compos'd and regular Behaviour, and obliging them to a constant Attendance upon the publick Worship of G O D. By which Means, Vice is shut out, at an Age, when it has otherwise the most easy Entrance, and Goodness is put in Possession of their Hearts from the Beginning; and the Soil being thus sweet and clean, the Seeds of Religion that are sown in it, grow up and thrive apace, and rarely fail of bringing forth Fruit to Perfection, that is, of making sober, diligent, and religious Christians, prepar'd, by that Means, to live comfortably in this World, and to be eternally happy in the next. And who, that has the Bowels of a Man, and knows the Value of a Soul, but would desire a Share in this blessed Work? Who, that rightly considers his own Interest, would not employ some Part of his Treasure, where the Increase is so great; great, both to himself and others, both in this World and the next? And who, that has any Relish of Religion and Goodness, would be debarr'd from labouring in a Vineyard, that brings these Fruits to so great Perfection? G O D be thank'd, the Labourers are many; Numbers of pious and good Christians have their Hearts and Hands open, to carry on these Nurseries of Religion for the Poor: but it must be remember'd, that as the Labourers are many, so the *Harvest* is exceeding great, and calls for many
more

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more Hands. *Multitudes* of poor Children, for Want of Education, lie still expos'd to the same Miseries, both temporal and spiritual, from which the Number taken in (very small in Comparison to those without) is happily delivered; and the Reason why more are not invited and constrain'd to come in, is not, because no more are to be *found* in our Streets and Lanes, but because there is yet no Provision for more. And no Christian can desire a fairer Argument to promote the Enlargement of the Provision by greater Degrees of Liberality, than to be an Eye-Witness of the excellent Effects which the Charities in this Way do every Year produce. When it pleases GOD to prosper the Design in so remarkable a Manner, it is a Testimony of his Liking and Acceptance; and his watering the Seed that is already sown, so plentifully, with the Dew of his Blessing, is an Invitation to every Christian to sow still more plentifully, in an Assurance that GOD will raise from it a proportionable Increase. Upon the first Contrivance of these Schools of Charity in the Nation, a Christian, otherwise of no uncharitable Temper, might be allow'd to doubt whether they were really practicable, and how far they would answer the Ends propos'd, and upon these Accounts might suspend or contract his Charity, till he should see the Event. But now, we see such great Effects from such slender Beginnings, and how much more glorious the Fabrick might be made, if the Foundations were enlarg'd; nothing can tie up the Hands of Men from contributing to this great Work, but an utter Unconcernedness for the Religion of JESUS CHRIST, and the Salvation of Mankind.

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Lastly, THE Value of this kind of Care and Charity rises still higher, as it extends not only to the present Age, but to *Posterity* also. As we are Men, endow'd with Reason and Understanding, we are all Members of one Civil Society; as we are Christians, baptized into the same common Faith, we are all Members of the Church of CHRIST upon Earth. And as we are Members both of a Civil and a Christian Society; we stand engaged not only to study the Welfare of both, during our own Time, but also to do what in us lies, that both be transmitted in a peaceable and flourishing State, to our latest Posterity. This is what Mankind readily acknowledge and practise in their private Capacities, as they are Fathers and Heads of Families; making it not only their Care, but the greatest Care of their Lives, to convey Comfort and Honour to their Posterity. Which the *Roman* Orator speaks of, not only as an Inclination of Nature, but as a strict Duty, resulting from the Wisdom of Providence in the Government of the World, and founded on the Obligations resting upon us, for the many good

Things which descended to us from our
Cicero de Forefathers. *Nec vero dubitet Agricola,*
Senect. *quamvis Senex, quærenti cui serat? re-*

*spondere, Diis immortalibus, qui me non accipere modò
hæc à majoribus voluerunt, sed etiam posteris prodere.*

“ If a Husbandman, (says he) tho’ never so aged,
“ be ask’d, Who he sows for? let his Answer be,
“ For GOD; whose Will it is, that as we received
“ these Things from our Ancestors, we should also
“ transmit them to our Posterity.” In like Manner,
with Regard to the *publick* Welfare of Church and
State; as we are Members of a Society, and succeed
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in the National Blessings of Peace and Order, convey'd to us by our Ancestors, we stand engaged to convey to our Posterity the like Blessings; and much more, as we are Members of a Christian Society, are we bound to transmit and secure to them the yet greater Blessing of a *National* Piety and Religion.

AND what is thus *owing* to Posterity, nothing will more enable the present Age to *discharge*, than this Institution of publick Schools of Charity; where the Children of the poorest and meanest Sort, whom both Magistrates and Ministers find by Experience to be the most ungovernable and dissolute Part of the Nation, are now civiliz'd, and are daily imbibing the Principles of Humanity and Religion, to be shown and practis'd in the next Age: When, we have Reason to hope, they will be the great Examples of Peace and Piety; and, I will add, the most useful Assistants to Magistrates and Ministers in the Maintenance and Propagation of both.

BUT that we may be sure, under the Influence of GOD's Grace, that we are conveying to our Posterity a Blessing *unmix'd*; great Care must be taken, not only that no Principles be instill'd into them, but such as are sound and good, but also that those be instill'd with the greatest Diligence, which are in their Nature of greatest and most constant Use in the Course of a *private* Life; such as immediately tend to make Men serious Christians, and peaceable Subjects: and above all, that their Minds be not tinctured with any new and singular Notions, either in Religion or Government; which would only divert their Minds from the substantial Duties and Offices of Religion, and make them proud, busy, and contentious.

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IN Religion, there are many Points controverted with no little Warmth, which stand at a great Distance from the Foundations of Christianity; but yet, being espoused by Persons of Figure and Learning, they presently become Party-points, and Profelytes are made with as much Zeal, as if the whole Christian Scheme were to stand or fall with them. Such were, in the last Age, the Heads which have been commonly known and distinguished by the Name of the *Five Points*; and such are, in our Age, the *Real Sacrifice*, the *Absolution of the Priest*, and the like; which being managed with Calmness and Decency, may be innocently contested amongst learned Men (tho' perhaps not over usefully even among them) but are much above the Reach of Children, and generally of their Teachers too; in whose Hands therefore they are at best but idle Amusements, and, if put into their Hands, would naturally lead them into two great Evils, namely, to mistake such speculative Points for Fundamentals, and to bestow greater Zeal upon those, than even upon the Fundamentals themselves.

FOR these Reasons, great Care ought to be taken in the Education of Children, that no such Mixtures slide in among the Fundamentals of Christianity; and to confine them to such Doctrines and Principles as more immediately concern Faith and a good Life, as the only Doctrines that are necessary to Salvation: To teach them their Duty to GOD, their Neighbour, and themselves; to make them sensible of the Necessity of the Grace of GOD to enable them to perform it, and that the only Means of obtaining the divine Grace, is, earnest Prayer, and a religious Use of the
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Ordinances of the Gospel: To instruct them carefully in the Nature of the Gospel-Covenant, and above all, in the whole Work of our Redemption by JESUS CHRIST, as the great Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind; who hath made *Atonement* for us, and thro' whom alone we have Access to GOD. A Doctrine, the more necessary to be inculcated, not only as it is the great Foundation of Christianity, but because so many in this Age are labouring openly and bare-faced to turn the whole Christian Scheme into a System of mere Morality.

AND, with Regard to those other Points, it is much to be lamented, that even Divines, who are agreed, that whether the Lord's Supper be a real Sacrifice, or only the *Commemoration* of a *Sacrifice*, the spiritual Effects are the very same, should raise a Dispute concerning that Point, at a Time when it is openly denied, that the very Sacrifice of CHRIST upon the Cross was *real* and *propitiatory*: And further, when they are agreed, that whether the Absolution of the Priest be *Authoritative* or *Declaratory* only, the Effect depends upon the inward Disposition of the Person who receives it, they should spend their Zeal upon that Head, at a Time when the very Being of Church Power, and the divine Institution of a Gospel-Ministry, are openly disputed, or rather flatly denied. Undoubtedly, the best Service that can be done to Religion by Persons of Learning in this Age, is, to watch those most narrowly, who are undermining the Foundations of it; and the best Way to prepare Children to be a true Support and Honour to Religion in the next Age, is to restrain them diligently from unnecessary Speculations of all Kinds, and to turn their
Minds

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Minds stedfastly upon the only Points, which properly concern them, namely, the great Rules of Faith and Practice.

AND as in Religion, so also in *Government*, many speculative Points are sprung, concerning the Constitutions of Kingdoms, and the Rights of Princes; generally, with a Design to breed Disturbances in the State, and to perplex the publick Administration. But, be the Design what it will, they seldom fail of those unhappy *Effects*; especially among the meaner Sort, who having not Capacity enough to enter into the Grounds and Reasons of such Things, are carried away with *Words* and *Names*, while they remain utter Strangers to the real Merits of the Cause. By this one Stratagem, more than any other, the present Age has been miserably divided into Parties and Factions; which have more than once brought Church and State to the Brinks of Destruction: and tho' we are not to *hope* that Persons, who are already heated in this kind of Service (be they ever so unfit to judge) will be perswaded to confine themselves to their proper Business, and to leave the publick Administration to wiser Heads; yet certainly, to prevent these Mischiefs from descending to our Posterity, it is proper that the *younger Sort* be restrain'd from mixing in these unwarrantable Follies: That they be taught, not to speak Evil of Dignities; but to reverence Authority, and to pay all Duty, Honour and Obedience, to the *Powers that are*; and this not only for Conscience Sake, but for the Sake of *Interest* too, as we have no other Security under GOD, for our Religion and Liberties: Which as it may be said and inculcated, with the greatest Truth and Justice; so will it not

not fail to be inculcated by all, who have the Care of Youth, and at the same Time wish well to our most happy Establishment. And as this Lesson, of reverencing Authority, and leaving the publick Administration to the proper Hands, naturally prepares them for another excellent Rule of the Apostle, *1 Thess. iv. 11.* to study to be quiet, and to do their own Business, and to work with their own Hands; so those two, jointly, lay the Foundation, of a wise, useful, and comfortable Life, of a Life of Quietness, Peace, and Love. Whereas the listing Children in Party Opinions and Party Measures, lays the surest Foundation for a Life of Idleness and Folly; and besides, how monstrous would it be in a *Christian* Education, if Children were to be train'd up, from their Cradles, to a settled Dislike and Abhorrence of one *half* of Mankind!

HAPPY therefore is it, for these tender Years now before us, and for their Brethren throughout these Kingdoms, that both themselves and their Teachers are under *peculiar* Restraints from falling into those Follies and Extravagancies; since whatever Divisions and Animosities there may be amongst us in other Respects, in this of supporting and encouraging our Schools of Charity, both Sides are entirely agreed. And as the Children would be betrayed into the highest Act of Ingratitude, should they be led to reproach and revile their Benefactors or their Cause; so would the Teachers be guilty, not only of great Ingratitude, but also of the highest Imprudence, or rather Madness, if a blind Zeal for any Party should induce them to encourage or permit the least Indignity against those, by whom they are subsisted in such a kind and bountiful Manner.

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MAY these and all other Infections ever remain at the greatest Distance from those publick Nurseries of Virtue and Religion: Let it be always their distinguishing Honour, that whatever Prejudices may be imbibed elsewhere, in these shall be instill'd the Principles of Christianity, pure and unmix'd; and that, however almost all Orders and Degrees among us are involved in Contentions, however Lying, and Slandering, and Malice, have well nigh overspread the Face of these Nations; yet nothing shall be found within those Walls, but Peace, and Truth, and Charity. And finally, how long soever it may please GOD, for our Sins, to suffer Divisions amongst us in other Matters, may we ever remain unanimous in the Support and Maintenance of our Schools of Charity; as Institutions of the greatest and most evident Benefit to Religion and Government, and next to our Gracious Sovereign and his Royal Issue, the surest Pledges of the Favour and Goodness of GOD, to Us and our Posterity.





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of

St. *S E P U L C H R E*,

JUNE 13. 1717.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *WILLIAM*, Lord Bishop of *SALISBURT*.

J O H N XIII. 34.

*A new Commandment I give unto you, That
ye love one another; as I have loved you,
that ye also love one another.*



THESE Words contain one of our Saviour's dying Injunctions, which he gave his Disciples when he was taking his Leave of them; the Duty enjoin'd is that of Christian Love and Charity, of which he was the greatest Pattern and Example that ever was, if we consider either the Value of the Gift he was then going to bestow

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bestow, or the Unworthiness of those for whom he intended it: The Gift, no less than the Life of the Son of GOD; those for whom he was to lay it down, his professed Enemies; by both which he hath taught us to be ready to contribute all that is in our Power, to the Relief and Support of our poor necessitous Brethren, and to extend our Charity even to our most provoking Enemies. And if we consider this Christian Charity in that extensive Meaning as to the Objects, and that Intensity in which he has enjoin'd it, as to the Measures and Degrees of it, we shall find it is *a new Commandment* indeed, and such as no other Institution but his, ever laid upon its Professors; tho' if we consider likewise the Motives enforcing it, which are peculiar to Christianity too, that of our Lord's Example, with others which I shall by and by insist upon, we shall see Reason enough to set about the Practice of the Duty.

I may not pretend, in the Compass of a Sermon, to treat of this great Subject, in all the various Kinds and Parts of it; but shall confine my self at present, to that particular Branch of it, which relates to the Poor and Necessitous, and consists in relieving their Wants, and contributing to their Support. And in speaking to this, I shall,

First, CONSIDER the Duty it self in that Extent, in which it is enjoined by the Christian Religion. And,

Secondly, SHALL inforce the Practice of it, by such Motives, as are peculiar to that Institution. And,

Thirdly, APPLY the whole to the present Occasion.

First,

First, I shall consider the Duty it self in that Extent, in which it is enjoyned by the Christian Religion.

AND here Three Things are to be enquired into; Who are the proper Objects; What the just Measures; And what the right Principle of this Charity.

THE First is that Question of the Lawyers, in Luke x. 29. — *Who is my Neighbour?* To which the Story which our Saviour told upon that Occasion, will give us a very satisfactory Answer; where He represents a *Jew* assaulted in his Journey by Thieves, stripped and wounded, and left half dead in the Way; A *Samaritan*, travelling that Road, saw him in that pitiful Condition, *and had Compassion on him, he put on Bowels of Mercy towards him*; and not only so, but *Kindness* also; he did not only pity, but relieve him too, and that suitably and proportionably to his Wants, for he went to him, and bound up his Wounds, pouring in Oil and Wine, and set him on his own Beast, and brought him to an Inn, and took Care of him, and when he departed, he gave the Host Money, and Charge of him, promising also to repay whatever should be further expended upon the wounded Man's Account.

Now we are to consider, that the *Jews* and *Samaritans* were professed Enemies, and Haters of one another; there was not so much as any Civil Commerce between them: When our Saviour, tired with his Journey, sat on *Jacob's Well*, and desired that small Courtesie of a Woman that came thither to draw Water, to give him a little to drink, she wonder'd *that he being a Jew*, should ask even that poor Favour, or

rather Act of common Humanity, of *her that was a Samaritan*, John iv. Another Time, when he sent his Disciples into a Village of *Samaria*, to make ready for him, the *Samaritans* would give him no Reception, because *his Face was as though he would go to Jerusalem*, Luke ix. On the other Hand, what Thoughts the *Jews* had of the *Samaritans*, may be gathered from that Expression of theirs to our Saviour in the viiith of St. *John*; who being baffled by him, and having no Return to make but reviling and ill Language, call him, as the most reproachful Title they could give him, a *Samaritan*; *Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan?* They knew very well that he was not a *Samaritan*; but as a *Turk* is used among us as an Expression for a cruel barbarous Man, and a *Jew* to signify a covetous, griping Extortioner, tho' they are not *Turks* or *Jews*; so here they used the Word *Samaritan* to CHRIST, as the most odious Name they could call him by: And yet, notwithstanding all the Distance, and Hatred, and Enmity, that was between them, our Lord, in Answer to the Question, *Who is my Neighbour*, gives an Instance of a *Samaritan*, performing the most kind and charitable Offices to a distressed *Jew*; thereby intimating, that any Person in Want or Misery, tho' a Stranger or Enemy to us, must be looked upon as our Neighbour, and an Object of such Relief and Assistance as we are able to give him.

WHEN I said any Person in Want, I meant such as are so necessarily, and not through their own wilful Default and Idleness: Such as cannot support themselves, or their Families, by their honest Labour; not such as can, and will not; but choose to live lazily by a Trade of Begging; as to such, 'tis so far from being

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Charity, or a Duty to relieve them, that, on the contrary, 'tis a Sin; a Sin against the Laws of the Land, which require that such should be corrected rather than relieved: A Sin against that Apostolical Rule, that *those that will not work, should not eat*: A Sin against the very Persons so relieved, who are thereby encouraged in that Idleness, which is it self a Sin, and may probably lead them on to greater: A Sin against the Publick, which by such Encouragement, is hinder'd from the Service, which was justly due from those Persons, who are become Pests and Nuisances to it: A Sin against the truly Poor and Necessitous, who suffer by our misplacing our Charity upon undeserving Objects; for by how much we give to such, by so much the less able are we to relieve the others.

THE proper and deserving Objects of this Sort of Charity, are such whose Wants are real, who are well disposed to Industry and Labour, but either are disabled by Weakness and Impotence, Sickness or old Age, or other Methods of God's wise Providence; or if they are able to work, cannot have Employment, tho' they desire it; or else have so large a Family, that their honest Labour and Diligence cannot support them; Poor House-keepers, Prisoners, Widows, Orphan Children, &c.

AND as to these, and such like, no Difference of Country, Opinion, Party or Religion; no Affronts, or Offences against us, must be any Obstructions to our Charity, or hinder us from affording them such Relief, as their Wants require, and our Abilities will allow us to give.

INDEED where the Objects are so many, that our Charity, if we would, cannot reach to them all, there

we have a Judgment of Discretion, and may prefer one before another. Where several are under a common Necessity, and their Wants and Circumstances are alike, there no doubt we may have Regard to the Relation that any of them bear to us, whether it be natural, civil, or spiritual; to their Worth and Deserts, and give the Preference accordingly; but where the Circumstances are unequal, some are under only some common Want, others driven to the last Extremity; there the latter, tho' the more unworthy, must be preferred, and the Considerations of Desert or Relation must give way to the pressing Necessity.

Secondly, I am in the next Place to speak to the Measures of this Charity: And here it must not be expected, that I should particularly determine the *quantum*, what Proportion of his Estate or Income every Man should give; Mens Circumstances are so various, that no one particular Rule can reach them all, and GOD has left it to every Man's Discretion *to do as he purposeth in his Heart*; But yet some general Observations may be drawn from Scripture, which, if every Man will honestly apply to his own Case, will be sufficient to direct his Practice in this Matter.

St. Paul giving Directions to the *Corinthians*, about their Collections for the Poor, in the *xvith* Chap. of 1st Epistle, Verse 2. advises, *That every Man should lay by in Store Weekly*, i. e. for the Relief of the poor Saints, *as GOD hath prospered him*: Where I observe,

1. THAT the Fund out of which a Man must be charitable, is that wherewith GOD *hath prospered him*, i. e. that which is his own, and which he came honestly by: What a Man owes to another, under which I comprehend a competent Provision for his Family, he cannot

cannot call his own; Justice must take Place of Charity, and where both cannot be done, a Debt must be paid rather than an Alms given; what a Man came dishonestly by, is yet less his own, and cannot be said to be that wherewith *GOD bath prospered him*: Nor can it be imagined that any Thing gotten by Violence or Fraud, can be a Sacrifice with which he will be pleased, *who hates Robbery for Burnt-Offerings*: *Zaccheus*, in the *xixth* of *St. Luke*, when he entertained *CHRIST*, and was mercifully received by him, thought it not enough to declare, that *the half of his Goods he gave to the Poor*, which yet was a large Gift; for the *2d* Verse tells us, *he was Chief of the Publicans, and was rich*; but adds, if *I have wronged any Man, I restore him fourfold*.

THE Fruits of Oppression or Deceit, are no Offerings for the Altar of *GOD*; what is obtained by such Methods, must be restored to those, from whom it has been unjustly taken; if they are dead, to their Children or Heirs; if none of them are to be met with, it must be disposed of to the Poor; but yet it cannot be placed upon the Account of Charity, it is only an Act of strict Justice: What remains clear to a Man after Satisfaction made of Debts justly contracted, and Restitution of whatsoever has been unjustly obtained, is the only Fund for Charity. I observe,

2. THAT as this is the only Fund for Charity, so our charitable Distributions must be in Proportion to our Fund; we must lay by for charitable Uses, as, or in Proportion to that, which, by *GOD's* Blessing, we have received; of those who have larger Incomes, larger Distributions are required, as from those that have less, less will be accepted. *Give to the most High*, says

the Son of Sirach, according as he has enriched thee. If thou hast Abundance, says Tobit, give Alms accordingly; if thou have but little, be not afraid to give according to that little. I observe,

3. THAT our Distributions must bear a large Proportion to our respective Funds. This I gather,

1. FROM those Expressions which St. Paul uses in his Exhortation to this Duty, in 2 Cor. ix. of *sowing bountifully*, of *abounding to every good Work*, of *being enriched in every Thing to all Bountifulness*, of *liberal Distributions*, &c. And,

2. FROM that Consideration with which he enforces it, ver. 8. *That GOD is able to make all Grace abound to them*, i. e. to furnish them with such a plentiful Supply of the Things of this World, as shall answer their own Wants, and enable them to supply the Needs of others; which seems to imply, that he expected they should be ready, if Occasion should require it, to give so liberally, as in some Measure to impoverish, and put themselves in a Condition of Dependance upon the Providence and Power of GOD for a Supply; and this he intimates again in the 10th Verse, where, praying for a Blessing upon them for their Liberality, he begs that he that furnishes the liberal with the Power and Will to be charitable, would *minister Bread for their Food*, i. e. provide all Necessaries for them, as well as increase the Fruits of their Righteousness: So that hence we see, that we must not only communicate to our poor Brethren, out of our Superfluities and Abundance, but be willing, if their Needs should require it, sometimes to put our selves to some Streights, rather than not supply their pressing Necessities.

4. I shall add but one Thing more upon this Head and that is that excellent Rule of our Saviour's in *Matt. vii. 12. Whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them*: And certainly whenever a proper Object of Charity presents it self to me, if I would but suppose my self in that poor, hungry, naked, destitute Creature's Circumstances, and him in mine; and consider what, and in what Proportion, I might then lawfully and reasonably desire he should do for me, and perform to him accordingly; I should then come up to the just Measure of Charity; for I should *love my Neighbour as my self*.

THE *Third* Particular to be enquired into, is the right Principle of this Charity; and if this be wanting, let it be placed upon the most proper Objects, and distributed in the largest Proportion, 'twill not be accepted by GOD, nor entitle me to his Favour; if Vanity and Ostentation, and a Desire to be seen and admired for it by Men, be the Motives of it, their empty Applause is all the Reward I must expect for it: No, if I would have my Charity placed to GOD's Account, it must proceed from Principles that respect him, from *Obedience, Love, and Faith*; and if I am charitable out of a Sense of Duty, and in Obedience to his Commands, who has strictly enjoined me to be so; out of a Sense of his Love and Bounty to me, and the Obligations of Gratitude, which I lie under to him for it, thankfully embracing the Opportunity of making some Acknowledgments of his Goodness and Mercy; some small Returns for it to his poor Members, whom he has appointed as his Substitutes to receive those Expressions of our Love, which he is not capable of; and out of a firm Faith in his Promises, relating both to this, and the other Life,

being fully perswaded that whatever I dispose of in Charity, is placed out in the safest Hand, and at the best Interest; assuring my self that I shall reap according to my sowing in the Blessings of this World, if GOD sees them best for me; but certainly in the more valuable ones of the next; my Alms will come up before GOD, as a Sacrifice of a sweet smelling Savour; and even a *Cup of cold Water*, bestowed by such as have not more to give, out of such Principles, will not lose its Reward.

THUS I have considered the Duty, with Respect to its Objects, Measures, and Principles.

2. I now proceed to the Obligations enforcing it, which are peculiar to Christianity.

Now to the Engagements which Nature has laid Men under to this Duty, as that they are all Brethren, in Respect of their Origin, as being made of one Blood, and descended from the Loins of one common Parent, and that therefore they ought to *love as Brethren, and be pitiful*; That no Man is Self-sufficient, but in some Respect or other wants the Assistance of others; and therefore 'tis highly reasonable that every one should give that Help to his Brother, which his own Wants and Infirmities may make him some Time or other stand in need of from him.

To these and other natural Motives to this Duty, Christianity has added these following ones.

First, As Christians, we are much more nearly related to each other, than we were by Nature; by Nature we are all Brethren, but as Christians, we are all Members of one Body.

THIS Consideration St. Paul insists largely upon, in the *xiith* Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, to perswade them to a Sympathy, and Fellow-Feeling with

with each other, in their several Circumstances; to a tender Concern for, and mutual Care of one another: He urges that the Body natural, tho' it hath many Members, is yet one Body; that tho' the Foot is not the Hand, and the Ear is distinct from the Eye, yet each of them are Members of the same one Body; that no one of the Members can say, it has no need of another; but the weakest and less honourable are useful and necessary in their proper Places; that GOD hath so temper'd the Body, and disposed or set every one of the Members, that there should be no Division, no separate Interests in it; but that each should have the same kind Regard to another as to it self; sympathizing with the others in all Conditions whether of Pain or Pleasure, feeling the Smart when any other Member receives Hurt, and being eased when that is relieved; that as the natural Body is one, being inform'd by one Soul, which animates all the Parts of it; so the Myltical Body, the Society of Christians, being inform'd by one Spirit, communicated to it from the Head CHRIST JESUS, which gives spiritual Life and Motion to all the living Members of it, is one likewise; from whence he infers, that therefore all the Members of this spiritual Body should have the same Sympathy with one another, as those of the natural have, *Rejoicing with them that rejoice, and weeping with them that weep*, putting on, as becomes Persons so closely united to them, *Bowels of Mercy and Kindness*, to their suffering Fellow Members, heartily compassionating, and readily relieving them, as bearing a Share in their Afflictions with them.

2. THE Performance of this Duty of Charity, is made by our Saviour the distinguishing Mark, by which his Disciples are to be known, from Men professing any other

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other Religion; *A new Commandment*, says he in the Text, *I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this shall all Men know that you are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* As if he should have said; no other Institution ever enjoin'd this Duty in so extensive a Meaning as to the Objects, or in so intense and high a Degree as to the Exercise and Instances of it, as mine does; and therefore by your faithful Discharge of it, in the Sense in which I require it, the World will know you to be Christians, and distinguish you from the Followers of any other Master. Now will it not be very unseemly for a Christian to appear without his Livery, without the Badge of his Profession? Will it not look as if he were ashamed of his Master or his Service? And may he not expect that his Master in his Turn will be ashamed of him, when he shall come in the Glory of his Father, with the Holy Angels? A Disciple of CHRIST without Love to his Brethren, an uncharitable Christian! They are Contradictions, they are incompatible Denominations, whoever is one, is not the other; he that is a Christian, is not uncharitable; and he that is uncharitable, is no Christian: And this will appear yet more clearly from the

3. OBLIGATION to this Duty, peculiar to Christianity; namely, the Example of CHRIST, which was such a one as the World never heard of before or since; Now to this End has CHRIST left us an Example, that we should follow his Steps; and in no one Instance has he more frequently or earnestly called upon us to imitate him, than in that of Love: See how pathetically he urges his Love to them, as a Motive to engage his Disciples to love one another, St. John xv. 12, &c. *This is my Commandment*, says he, *that ye love one another, as I have*

have loved you. Greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friend, ye are my Friends. — I have called you not Servants, but Friends — Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. Here he sets forth the Greatness of his Love to them, in that he was ready to give the highest Instance of Love, that any one could give to his dearest Friend, even that of dying for them; in that he had treated them all along not at that Distance, which the Relation of Master and Servant might call for, but with the Intimacy and Freedom of Bosom Friends; and in that he had placed his Affections upon them, before they had made any Advances towards him: And to what End does he insist upon all this? Why only to prevail with them to obey that Command which he gave them in the Beginning of this Discourse, and which he here immediately repeats, *These Things I command you, that ye love one another.*

THE Example of CHRIST ought surely to be a most forcible Motive with Christians, to imitate him in any Instance, wherein he has proposed himself as a Pattern to them, for it is our very Profession to follow the Example of CHRIST, and be made like to him; but in this there is something so peculiar, that if it cannot prevail upon us any other Way, yet at least it must shame us into a Compliance with it; for with what Face can I profess my self a Disciple of the compassionate and bountiful Jesus, whose whole Employment was to go about doing Good, ministering to, and relieving the corporal and spiritual Wants and Ailments of all miserable Objects, that were presented to him, if I, *having this Worlds Good, can see my Brother have need, and shut up my Bowels of Compassion from him?*

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HAS my liberal Master given me all Things richly to enjoy, all Things appertaining to this Life and Godliness, all Things necessary to my safe Passage through this World, and to my Happiness in the next? And can I see my poor Brother grappling with Necessity, pressed down by Afflictions, and refuse to communicate out of the Abundance which I have freely received, towards the supplying his Wants, and supporting him under his Pressures?

ALAS! what can I say in Justification or Excuse of my self? Is my poor Brother much my Inferior, far below me? Why, what was I to CHRIST, poor Dust and Ashes to him, *who is over all, GOD blessed for ever?* Is he incapable of meriting any Kindness from me, or returning any to me? Why, what had I deserved from CHRIST, when he left the Bosom of his Father, the Glory he had with him before the World was, to come down upon this Earth, to live a persecuted Life, and suffer a shameful Death for my Salvation? His Love to me preceded my very Being, and supposed my Rebellion against him that gave it me; and what Reward am I able to render unto him for all his Benefits? All my Goodness cannot extend to him; I cannot be profitable to him, nor is it Gain to him if my Ways were perfect: Nay, is my Brother my provoking, ungrateful Enemy; has he wilfully injured me, when I had deserved well from him? Why, on what Terms was I, and were all Mankind with CHRIST, when he undertook that amazing Work of the Redemption of the World? Did he not hereby *recommend his Love to us, that while we were Sinners, He died for us?* If this Love of CHRIST cannot constrain us to follow his Example; if the Circumstances

of

of it cannot answer all Objections against our Charity to our Brethren ; I shall add but one Motive more ; namely,

4. THE Consequences which the Gospel assures will attend our Performance or Neglect of this Duty : It is *through the Gospel that Life and Immortality are brought to Light* ; i. e. there are more clear Revelations made in the Gospel of a future Judgment, and the Rewards and Punishments of another Life, than the World enjoy'd before : And he that is to execute that Judgment, and assign those Rewards and Punishments to Men, accordingly as they shall have obey'd, or not obey'd his Laws, has given such a Description of his intended Procedure, in the 25th of St. *Matt.* as if this Branch of Charity, the relieving those that are in Distress, were in the Letter, the *fulfilling of the whole Law* ; and he would enquire into nothing else, but how Men had behaved themselves, with Relation to that Royal Law of Love : For when he passes the Sentence of Glory upon the Blessed, he gives no other Reason for it, but because they had ministred to the Necessities of his poor Members : Nor does he assign any other Cause, for the Sentence of Condemnation upon the Wicked, but because they had deny'd those Instances, which he there mentions, of Charity to them.

WE must not indeed imagine, but that all the Actions of our whole Lives will be then brought into Judgment, and Account be then required of our whole Carriage, with Respect to all the Commands of the Gospel ; but from this Description we may very reasonably infer, that there will be a very particular Enquiry into the Observance of this Duty ; and a special
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Regard had by our Judge, to the Discharge or Neglect of it, in his Pronouncing the, *Come ye Blessed*, or, *Go ye Cursed*.

THUS I have dispatched my *Second* General, and laid before you some Motives enforcing this Duty of Charity, peculiar to the Christian Religion.

3. AND if the Motives are of any Weight with you, permit me, by Way of Application, to tell you, that you have now before you very moving, and deserving Objects, for your most liberal Exercise of the Duty.

AMONG all the various Kinds of Charity, I know none in which our largest Benefactions can turn to so good an Account, so many Ways, as in the supporting those Schools which are set up for the Education of poor Children.

BLESSED be GOD, that put it into the Hearts of those, who first set on Foot these truly Charitable, and Christian Designs; and blessed be they of the LORD, who have been contributing to, and instrumental in carrying them on: Designs, when successfully prosecuted, of so extensive an Influence, that if I should speak distinctly to it, I should much sooner weary out your Patience, than exhaust my Subject.

I shall but hint at a few of the Advantages of this Kind of Charity: This reaches not only to the Bodies of the Children which are cloathed, and who are instructed in some honest Employment, whereby they may subsist themselves, and be useful to the Nation; but to their much more valuable Parts, their Minds, which are cultivated and improv'd, early seasoned with Principles of Virtue and Probity, possessed with the Fear of GOD, and a Sense of Religion, and brought up in the *Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*.

ITS Influences are not confined to these poor Children, and their indigent Parents and Friends, who are mightily eased by it, but extend to the Publick: For whereas the Children of such as are not able themselves to give them any virtuous Education, or fit them for any honest Way of getting their Living, are too likely, if no Care be taken of them by others, to become Pests and Nufances to the Publick, either by setting up a lazy Trade of Begging, or else taking those worse Courses of Cheating, Pilfering, and Stealing, Robbing on the High Way, and House-Breaking; their Want of Principles disposing them for any villanous Practices, and their Poverty tempting them to them; an early Institution of such, in the Principles of our holy Religion; a teaching them betimes the Fear of the LORD; a weaning them from the Beginning from Idleness; a training them up in Industry, and capacitating them for honest Employments, must certainly arm them against the forementioned Practices, which are so offensive, and make them, with GOD's Blessing, useful Members of the Community: The Effects of this Charity will not be shut up within our own Age, but reach to the next Generation, which is to be composed partly of these Children, for whose Education I am now pleading.

A good Man, a Lover of his Country, cannot but be pleased to see a Foundation laid for the future Happiness of it; and certainly nothing can so much contribute to the Happiness of any Nation, as the Vertue and Piety of the Inhabitants.

THERE have, for some Years past, been pious Attempts made, which are still carrying on, by zealous and well affected Christians, for Reforming the present Age;

Age; and, praised be GOD, not without some good and visible Success; but a thorough Reformation is not to be expected till the next; 'tis not to be hoped for without beginning earlier, with a pious Institution of Children, seasoning them betimes with good Principles, and giving GOD an early Possession of them, before the Devil and evil Habits get hold of them; and it cannot but be a Delight to those that are truly pious, to sow the Seeds, as I may say, of such a blessed Harvest, tho' they must leave the next Generation to reap the happy Crop, which they can only look at afar off, and enjoy in Imagination.

NOW the Reformation, and consequently Happiness of the next Generation, depending so much upon the good Education of the Children that are born in this, who sees not what an excellent Labour of Love they are employ'd in, who are taking Care for the Christian bringing up of those Children, who have either no Friends, or such as are not able to take that Care for them? And in what other Instance can one place out his Charity, where it will turn to so good Account, so many Ways, as it will in promoting this excellent Work?

'TIS certain, that, generally speaking, the Wickedness of the *Adult*, is owing to the ill Training of the Child; but some Sorts of Crimes, and those which chiefly disturb the Publick, are more particularly occasioned for Want of an honest Education of the Children of the Poor; they have nothing of their own to subsist upon; they have not been trained up to Labour and Industry to get an honest Livelihood; they have no Principles to hinder them, either from taking that which is anothers, when they can come conveniently at it;

it; or from any other vile Method of gaining a Maintenance for themselves; and hence your Streets and Roads are crowded with lazy Beggars and Vagrants, and your Prisons filled with Felons and Burglers, and your Gallows loaded with those Criminals, who might, had they been well Educated, been in several Capacities serviceable to GOD and their Country.

HENCE it is that your Streets have been so much infested with that lewd Tribe of Night-Walkers, that the Hellish Brothel Houses have been supplied with Instruments to carry on their detestable and damnable Trade. Were the Female poor Children instructed in some Occupation or Manufacture, proper for their Sex, whereby they might honestly subsist, they would not be urged by Necessity, to that vile Commerce, of prostituting their Bodies for Gain; and were they thoroughly instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and possessed with a just Sense of the Duties that Religion requires from them, towards GOD, and towards themselves; no Temptation would prevail with them, to sin against their Bodies and Souls too in those Instances, which not only expose themselves to the Indignation of that GOD, who will *judge Fornicators and Adulterers*, but also provoke his Judgments against the Nation where they live, which is defiled by such Abominations, and must mourn for them.

HENCE it is in a great Measure, that Tumults and Riots are so frequent among us. Ambitious and enterprising Men could not attempt the Overthrow of a Government, and Ruin of a Nation, without the Assistance of the meanest of the People: Men of Substance generally care not to engage in such dangerous Undertakings; but the Scum of the People, those who

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either never had any Fortunes, or have wasted them by their Vices, are ready for any desperate Attempt; for they run no Risque, they have no Estate to lose, they are at the Bottom, they cannot be lower than they are in any Change of Government, but they hope to get something in the Scramble; they have a Chance they think to make their Fortune, and hence they are ready to follow any disappointed *Sheba*, that blows the Trumpet of Rebellion; whereas if these Persons had been bred up in some honest Employment, whereby they gain'd a comfortable Subsistence, and had been early instructed in the great Duties of Submission to lawful Governours, and Love to their Country, as their Circumstances would make them less liable to be prevail'd upon by any Temptations of that Kind, so their Principles would make them reject them with Indignation and Abhorrence.

THESE great Duties of Subjection to Government, and Love for our Country, next to those which we owe more immediately to GOD, ought chiefly to be inculcated into Young People: We see the dismal Effects of the Neglect of such Instruction at this Time, when, though we boast, and with good Reason, that we have the best Form of Government in the World, such a happy Constitution as is the Joy or Envy of the whole Earth; and the Administration of it is now in the Hands of one of the most gracious and best of Princes, that ever sat on this, or any Throne; Yet have there been Numbers found among us, who first by tumultuous Riots, and since by open Rebellion, have been endeavouring, in Conjunction with *Papists*, to dethrone their King, and subvert our Government; which Endeavours, if GOD for our Sins should have permitted to have been successful, must necessarily have brought upon us two of the
greatest

greatest Evils in this World, *Popery* and *Slavery*: Those therefore who have the Care of Children and Youth, should be sure to instruct them betimes in the Duty, which by the Laws of our Land they owe to their Governours, and which they are bound by the Law of GOD to perform, *not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience Sake*. They should possess them early with a just Value for our excellent Constitution in Church and State; they should instil into them a publick Spirit, by which they should prefer the Publick Good, to any private Interest; they should make them sensible of the Folly, as well as Baseness and Wickedness of proposing to raise any Advantage to themselves upon the publick Ruin, in which they, as well as others, will first or last be involved: We are all embarked upon one Bottom, and if the Vessel sinks, we must all go down with it. But to conclude: Since this Sort of Charity, this taking Care for the good Education of the Children of the Poor, when duly managed, is of so great and extensive an Advantage to the Souls as well as Bodies of those who immediately partake of it, to the Publick, and to the next Age, and probably to Generations after that: You see I cannot want Topicks to enlarge upon, as I hope you will not more Motives to perswade you, to further and encourage so excellent a Design: I shall only remind you of that which I hinted under the *Fourth* Motive, and leave it with you.

THAT the Performance of this great Duty of Charity (a noble Branch whereof I have now laid before you) will be very particularly enquired into, at the tremendous Day of Judgment: So the Judge has assured us the Articles of Enquiry will run; Have you cloathed the Naked, fed the Hungry, visited the Sick, and ministred to

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the other Necessities of my poor Members? And we may be sure, that he who shewed so much Tenderneſs and Compassion to Children himself, will reckon them in the Number of his Members, to whom he requires us to extend our Charity; and will repute our Performance or Neglect of this Duty to them, as a doing or not doing it to himself, at the dreadful Day of Account.

HAPPY, thrice happy then will they be, who can say, Here, LORD, are the little Children, whom, after thy Example, we have received into our Arms; whom we have been instrumental in Cloathing and Educating, in Rescuing out of the Snare of the Devil, and bringing them up in thy Nurture and Admonition: *Then shall the King say unto them, Come ye blessed Children of my Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you; in as much as ye have done it to these little ones, ye have done it unto me.*





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *S E P U L C H R E*,

JUNE 5. 1718.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *WILLIAM LUPTON*, D. D.

Preacher to the Honourable Society of *Lincoln's Inn*,
and Prebendary of *Durham*.

T I T. II. Part of the 14th Verse.

Zealous of good Works.



N essential Part of Christianity is now before us ; and whosoever falls short of this Character here given, and yet presumes to account himself the faithful Servant of CHRIST, is mistaken in his Notions of himself, and

frustrates the Purposes of his Redeemer. For the whole Verse runs thus, *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

By *good Works*, we may understand in General, the Exercise of Goodness, whether in Acts of Justice, Piety, or Charity. For the sincere Disciples of CHRIST are here first represented, as *Redeemed from all Iniquity, and Purified*; which Expressions do imply, their being delivered from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin. And when 'tis added, that those who *are Purified*, must be moreover *Zealous of good Works*, 'tis in these Words plainly signified, if it be not the peculiar Sense of them, that all faithful Christians are obliged, not only to avoid the *Commission* of Sin, but *Actually* to perform Positive Duties; that they must not only *cease to do evil*, as the Prophet *Isaiab* expresseth it, which is described by *Negative* Goodness; but also *learn to do well*, which is called *Positive* Goodness, and be *zealous* in so doing. These two Propositions therefore are observable from the Words;

I. THAT Positive Duty, or the Actual Exercise of Goodness, is indispensably required at our Hands. And,

II. THAT Zeal is the necessary Qualification of Positive and Actual Goodness.

I. THAT Positive, &c.

AND this I shall represent, *first*, under a *general* View: And, *secondly*, under some more *particular* Considerations. And,

I. THAT

I. THAT we are obliged to the actual Exercise of Goodness will appear, in a *general* Way, if we do but turn a Thought to the State and Order of created Beings, and the Designs of their Creator. For though no Vertue or Vice can be ascribed to those Beings, which have no Understanding; yet remiss and negligent Man may form a just and useful Reproof to himself upon this Observation, That whilst he, who is the Glory of visible Creatures, fails of exercising his Powers and Abilities, and of answering the Ends of his Creation, all the other Parts even of the natural World do exert themselves to their utmost Capacity, in promoting and fulfilling the great Ends and Purposes of Nature. The Sun ceaseth not to visit, and cheer, and beautify the World, but *cometh forth as a Bridegroom out of his Chamber, and rejoiceth as a Giant to run his Course*; And if it once *stood still in the midst of Heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole Day*, this was owing to the special Restraint of the Creator; for otherwise, *It goeth forth from the uttermost Part of the Heaven, and runneth about unto the End of it again*. And so the other Celestial Bodies maintain their constant Revolutions, for the Illustration of GOD's Glory, the Benefit of Mankind, and the Regularity and Harmony of the World.

AND if we bring down our Prospect into the lower Regions, there all the Orders of Beings purely Animate are in a State of Motion and Activity, under their proper Proportions. And those Things here below, as well as those above, which are destitute of Life, are not yet wanting in their *Motion*, but are making continual Advances, agreeably to their proper Tendencies for the Accomplishment of their proper

Ends. The Seas are fulfilling the Course of Nature by constant Agitations; and for the like Purpose, the Springs break forth into the *Rivers, which run among the Hills*. Even the Earth it self, unactive and sluggish as it is, must not stand an Exception to the general Laws of Activity, which the other natural Bodies are governed by, but bears its proper Part, and moves in Concert with them.

THUS it is in the Constitution of Things Natural: It doth not suffice that they do not act in a plain Opposition to the Intentions of their Maker, and the Laws assigned to them; but that they should not act at all, is likewise absolutely inconsistent with their State, and the Design of their Author. Operation is the End of created Beings, and each must actually perform its proper Offices, in Order to the Perfection of the whole. And such a Course of Operations, proportioned to the different Conditions of Beings, is still more eminent in the intellectual and moral World. The blessed Angels, which are vested with the highest Principles of Activity, are most remarkable for the Quickness and Constancy of their Motions, in Obedience to their Maker. Thus, in *Jacob's Vision*, we have an Account, *Gen. xxviii. 12. of the Angels of GOD ascending and descending betwixt Earth and Heaven*; And the Reason of this is plainly given by the *Apostle*, they are all *ministring Spirits*: To which Purpose we read of the *seven EYES, which are the seven SPIRITS of GOD, sent forth into all the Earth*; *Rev. v. 6.* And when with these Passages of Scripture we compare those others, wherein we have an Account of the *Angels standing round about the Throne, and falling before the Throne on their Faces, and worshipping GOD,*

we have in one View their Diligence in exercising Positive Acts of Homage and Obedience to the Almighty.

FROM all which it appears, that the several Powers and Capacities of all Beings are to be Actually exercised, according to the Direction and Appointment of GOD; and that if any of those Beings should only suspend the Exercise of their Powers and Capacities, so as not to act at all, according to their respective Conditions, they would thereby as plainly violate the divine Appointment, as if they should act in a direct Contrariety to it.

THUS the general Laws of created Beings do point out our Obligation to Positive Duty, or, the Actual Exercise of Goodness, and should be unto us a constant Rule of Instruction and Admonition; A Method of Instruction, not only very useful, in the Nature of it, and therefore necessary to be mentioned; but likewise recommended in the sacred Scriptures themselves, the Standard and Fountain of spiritual Wisdom and Instruction.

THERE we are taught, that *the Heavens declare the Glory of GOD*, the Elements also, and the Compounds of them, *Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapours, Wind and Storm, fulfilling his Word*: There we have an Admonition to exert our selves in proper Testimonies of Duty to GOD, taken from the natural Notices and Regards which are exerted by inferiour Beings, *the Ox knowing his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib*: There we are required to learn Application and Diligence in the Execution of Duty, from the Activity of very inconsiderable Creatures, labouring in Pursuit of their natural Tendencies and Direction,

rection; *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her Ways, and be wise.* There we are supplied by our Blessed Saviour Himself with an Argument, for the Actual Exercise of Goodness, taken from an Observation upon the Trees of the Field: *Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire,* Matt. vii. 19. Not only those Trees which produce Corrupt Fruit, but those that do not actually bring forth Good Fruit, those which produce no Fruit at all, must be destroyed. For, that this is the Meaning of the Text, is very plain from our LORD's Parable of the Fig-tree; The Owner whereof *said unto the Dresser of his Vineyard, Behold, these three Tears I come seeking Fruit on this Fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the Ground?* Luke xiii. To which nothing could justly be opposed but this, *Lord, let it alone this Year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear Fruit; well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.* When it finally proves Fruitless, it must, in all Reason, be finally destroyed.

To this Purpose our Blessed Saviour, in the Parable of the *Seed sown*, Matt. xiii. represents the Faithful and only acceptable Servants of GOD under the View of that Seed, which actually *brought forth Fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, and some thirty.* And in the Parable of the *Talents*, he introduceth the Person, who had *bid his Talent in the Earth*, under the Character of a *slothful, and wicked, and unprofitable* Servant, Matt. xxv. and justly obnoxious to the severest Punishment; Where it should be well observed, that this Servant had not employed his Talent to his Lord's Detriment or Dishonour; that he had not abused it,

or perverted it to any evil Purposes, in Contempt of his Lord, or direct Rebellion against him; he had not so much as squandred and wasted his Talent by any Means whatsoever; but he had neglected to improve it, to apply it to any Purpose, to make any Use of it at all; and upon this single Point, because he was slothful and unactive, did his Condemnation turn; though he had actually committed no Evil, yet because he had not actually done any Good, the dreadful Sentence is given against him, *Cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkeness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* The *unprofitable Servant* is the Parallel to the *fruitless Tree*, which must not be suffered to stand at all, because it would stand to no other Purpose but to cumber the Ground.

How superficial therefore and imperfect must our Notions of our own State be, if we do not plainly perceive our selves obliged, in Order to Salvation, not only to withstand the Temptations of Sin, but to fulfil the various Duties which are enjoined: Which may still further appear from that more *Particular* Consideration of this Point, which is now in the

Second Place to be added to the *General One* already offer'd. Where I shall represent our Obligation to *Good Works*, or, to the actual Exercise of Goodness, as such Good Works may be considered.

First, In Respect of GOD, as we are Created and Redeemed by him, and Subject to him, and therefore obliged to contribute our utmost to his Honour. For thus St. Paul does at once give us a Rule of Duty, and the Reason of it, *Glorify GOD in your Bodies, and in your Spirits, which are GOD's,* 1 Cor. vi. 20. And the Method of answering this high Obligation, and

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accomplishing this great End, is assigned by our Blessed Lord himself; *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good WORKS, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven,* Matt. v. 16. Whilst we deny our selves unlawful Pleasures, and unlawful Advantages, out of a Sense of Duty, grounded upon the Love of GOD, we do undoubtedly acquit our selves in an acceptable Manner before him; and if the other Parts of our Behaviour are but agreeable to this, we shall not fail of the Recompence of Reward; and as corrupt Inclinations Within are more powerful, and Temptations from Without more engaging, Acts of Self-denial will be still more approved in the Judgment of GOD, and crowned with a higher Reward. But still 'tis possible that we may deny our selves the Commission of most agreeable Sins, and yet contribute little or nothing to the Advancement of GOD's Glory. The abstaining from sinful Actions is indeed the preventing direct Dishonour to GOD; but our Obligation to promote GOD's Honour does signifie a great deal more than our avoiding plain Instances of Dishonour towards him; it implies Positive and Absolute Duties, whereby we shall give direct Occasion of Celebrating his Praise, and propagating the Glory of his Name. And therefore all those who are so far innocent and harmless, that they do not launch out into any Enormities, but yet spend their Lives, and possess their Talents, in a dreaming, and useles, and unactive Manner, are culpable and inexcusable.

WE are instructed, that we must *not live unto our SELVES, but unto the LORD*; and that *whatsoever we do, we must do all to the Glory of GOD*: And our

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Saviour teacheth us, how we are to promote GOD's Glory; *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit*, John xv. 8.

ALL Holy Men have, in their several Proportions, answer'd the Character of the *Baptist*, who *was a burning and a shining Light*, John v. 3. They have been eminent for their Acts of Piety, testifying their Constancy and Fervency in the Worship of GOD; Eminent, in the utmost Dangers, for the open Declaration and Profession of their Faith, for the Instigation, and Encouragement, and Confirmation of others in it, in Opposition to profane and gainsaying Men; Eminent for their Liberality and Charity, *honouring GOD with their SUBSTANCE*, Prov. iii. 9. as *Solomon* expresseth it; Eminent for their earnest Labours in relieving the Oppressed, reducing the Vicious, instructing the Ignorant, convincing the Erroneous, strengthening the Weak, satisfying the Doubtful, exciting the Negligent, and guarding Religion from the Attempts of its Enemies on every Side.

ST. Paul's greatest Glory is, that he *laboured more abundantly than they all*, in promoting the Glory of GOD. When these vigilant and active, these industrious and strenuous Instruments of GOD's Honour shall appear in the Judgment, how beautiful and joyful, how resplendent and glorious will their Appearance be? And how contemptible, and dismal, and dejected must those other Thoughtless Creatures appear, who have suffer'd their Lives to run down in Sloth and Indolence, neglecting the Honour of their Maker? Whilst the *One* inherits the Glory of *Good Works*; the *Other*, having been unfruitful, must sink under Shame and Confusion of Face. But,

Secondly,

Secondly, The actual Performance of Good Works will further appear necessary, when considered in Respect of our *Neighbour*. For, next to the Advancement of GOD's Glory. which is the chief End, and therefore should be the chief Aim of every Rational Creature; the Good of *Mankind* demands the Exercise of Goodness at our Hands. And as it is observed above, that our Obligation to *Glorifie* GOD, does lay us under a Necessity of all such Positive Duties, as may be subservient to that great Purpose, and does not consist in the pure Avoidance of wicked Actions, which would reflect Dishonour upon him; so here it is obvious, that the Good which we are to do unto our Brethren, is Direct and Positive, and does not only consist in our forbearing to hurt and annoy them.

UNDER the great Conflicts betwixt Kingdoms, in the direful State of War, that which succours and supports another, in the Defence of its just Rights and Privileges, is intitled to the proper Glories of Beneficence; but that which stands Neuter, deserves no Acknowledgments, because it confers no *Benefits*, and is but one Degree removed from the State of a professed Enemy. 'Tis by no Means a sufficient Justification, which Men commonly offer in their own Favour, that they have done no Injury to their Neighbours; for wide is the Difference betwixt an Oppressor and Benefactor, betwixt the Charitable and Injurious. It may easily happen, that he who is not so desperate as to become the one, is not yet found in the hopeful State of the other. No Man can value himself, for adding much to the Happiness of Mankind, purely on this Account, that he is not a Thief or a Robber. 'Tis not our keeping to the Letter of

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the sixth Commandment, that fills up the Measure of Duty to our Neighbour, in Regard to his Life; for as we must not destroy it, we stand further obliged to protect it, and to crown it with Comforts, by proper Acts of our own, to the utmost of our Power. 'Tis not sufficient that we do not *bate* our Neighbour; but we must moreover actually and ardently *love* him, and give all possible Demonstrations of that Love, by such Fruits of it, as may be most beneficial to him: 'Tis not sufficient, that we do not *covet any Thing that is his*, but we must moreover communicate unto him that which is our own, as his Exigencies require, and our Abilities allow.

THOSE have little Reason to expect Admission into the Society of the Blessed Above, who do not Contribute their utmost to the Happiness of Humane Society upon Earth. When we are taught that the Fruitless Tree must be cut down, that it may not be an Incumbrance upon the World, which receives no Advantage from it; What can those unprofitable Souls think of themselves, which serve to no other Purpose, but to drag their Bodies through the Benefits of the Air, which they scarce deserve to breathe in? Let them so far apply the Parable, as to consider, that though they are let alone for this Year also, yet GOD's Long-suffering will have a Period, and when they are *hewen down, they shall be cast into the Fire.*

THESE two Particulars are the weightiest Arguments of our Obligations to Positive Duty, [or the actual Exercise of Goodness; but still there are some other Considerations, which may be a further Illustration of this Point; As,

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, That Positive Goodness is necessary to prove our Fidelity in the Service of G O D. Whosoever neglects the Affirmative Precepts, whilst he observes the Negative ones, cannot be esteemed a faithful Servant; because he doth but observe a Part of his Lord's Will. And therefore as he falls short in his Service, he must do so in his Reward too. Though G O D rewards all that is *Religion* in us, yet he rewards nothing else, and doth not place to his Account, what is done upon a worldly Convenience to our selves. And 'tis observable, that if we go no further in our Duty, than abstaining from Excesses, there is nothing in this, but what Nature, without Religion, would suggest and support. The several Rules of Abstinence are so many Laws of Self-preservation; and 'tis possible, that our Obedience may rise to the Heighth of these, whilst we do not so much serve G O D as our selves. Therefore 'tis observable, that the ancient Philosophers, making Nature, rather than the Will of G O D, the Rule of their Virtue, did turn their Precepts chiefly upon Negative Goodness. But the *Son of G O D*, who came from Heaven to reveal his Father's Will, hath taught us to give other and higher Evidences of our Fidelity to G O D. The several Parables which have been mentioned, and the Parable of the Virgins, and the Account of the last Judgment, do all signifie, that our Fate at the Last Day will be determined by the Measure of Positive Goodness: Which will appear,

Fourthly, To be still further necessary in us, as it is an engaging Recommendation and Endearment of Religion to others. 'Tis obvious that those Duties are peculiarly reasonable and necessary which reflect Honour upon our Holy Religion; as Positive Goodness

ever

ever does. The Obligations of this Kind are so great, that a Negligence or Indifference towards them is accounted Criminal. *He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.* The Disciples of our LORD are, for the Influence of their Example, and for extending the Credit of Religion, compared to the *Salt of the Earth, and to a City set on an Hill.*

THE uncommon and shining Vertues of the first Christians were, under GOD, highly instrumental towards the Conversion of the World. Their Perseverance in Well-doing, their Zeal for their Master, and the Effects of their Charity to all the World, were so many *Demonstrations of the Spirit.* The *Apologists* did ever appeal to this known and unexceptionable Testimony in their several *Apologies* for the *Christian Religion.* And this Argument was of the greater Force, because it was such as the Ignorant could easily conceive, and the Learned could neither despise nor disprove.

SUCH was the Excellency of their Examples, and such should be ours, if we would be rank'd amongst those, *who turn many to Righteousness.* We should not be content with low and obscure Performances, but sometimes rise to such, as this Day testifies; such as may strike Emulation or Reverence into the Beholders, and may adorn and recommend that Truth which we profess.

THE *Apostle* exhorts to *Adorn the Doctrine of GOD our Saviour in all Things,* Tit. ii. 10. And, to provide for *Honest* (*καλὰ, Honourable*) *Things, not only in the Sight of the LORD, but also in the Sight of Men,* 2 Cor. viii. 21.

Fifthly, Positive Goodness is necessary to that Perfection which the Gospel requires. A *Christian* is described under Characters importing, not only that he is *purged from dead Works*, but that he *faithfully serves the living GOD*; not only that he hath *put off the Old Man*, but that he hath *put on the New Man*, in Order to become *an Habitation of GOD through the Spirit*.

THE Christian Institution is a Discipline qualifying us for Heaven, and the several Rules of the one do, in some Respect, assimilate our Affections to the other. That Flame of Divine Love is to be raised in this Life, which is to shine forth in full Glory for ever in the next. But Negative Goodness is at a great Distance from this Perfection, and is indeed little better than the Infancy and Elements of Religion. *Repentance from dead Works*, is but the previous Disposition to that perfect Goodness, which is required in a *Christian*. The Restraint of the Passions, which made so great a Part of *Philosophy*, is no more than a Preparation to the principal Duties of *Christianity*.

THE peculiar Doctrines of the Gospel begun, where the other Institutions ended. When Man's *Reason* was at a loss, and could carry him no further, *Faith* came in to his Succour, that he might go on to Perfection. And as Faith is in it self the highest and noblest Principle, so it is a practical Principle, and *by Works is Faith made perfect*.

THE Gospel does not only require those Good Works which were enforced by the Law of Nature, and that in higher Degrees of Excellency than what they appear'd in before; but does likewise call for *Additional Acts* of Goodness, in such Instances as could never have issued forth from natural
Light.

Light. Those Good Works, which stand in the first Rank under the *Gospel*, are such as *Reason* without *Faith* could not discover, and *Nature* without *Grace* could not perform.

AND all this ought to be well consider'd by those, who go on in a middle Way betwixt Saints and Sinners; who, though they be free from the Vices of the Carnal Man, are yet at a great Distance from the Perfections of the Spiritual. They satisfy themselves, if they step not aside into wrong Paths, though they do not move forward in the right one, toward the *Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS*. They hang in a State of Indifferency between GOD and the World, without any Vehemence of Tendency toward either. And though they have Experience enough to see through this grave Cheat, which is so commonly put upon Life, yet they still remain indulgent of Ease, and patient of Delusion. They are not willing to offend GOD by flagrant Acts of Iniquity; but they continually provoke him, by neglecting to do those Things that are pleasing in his Sight.

WHEREFORE let every unprofitable Servant carefully view the Precipice, whereon he stands; that he may betimes retire from the dreadful Brink to a safer Situation: Let his total Neglect of Good Works be succeeded by Earnestness, and Assiduity, and Fervency in the Performance of them. And this leads me in the next Place briefly to represent,

II. THAT Zeal is the necessary Qualification of Positive Duty, or Acts of Goodness; for 'tis incumbent upon the Servants of our LORD, that they should be Zealous of Good Works. The Value of Perfor-

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mances does much depend upon that Disposition of Mind from whence they flow. When good Works are done with a Negligence and Unconcern, as if it were perfectly indifferent to the Man, whether they be undertaken or let alone, whether they succeed or miscarry, they then sit upon him with a very ill Grace, and he may easily expect, that what is performed with so much Coldness, will meet with a cold Reception. 'Tis the Life and Spirit, the Sprightliness and the Fervour of Religious Enterprizes, that must recommend them to GOD, the Discerner of Spirits. It was this Warmth of Concern for GOD's Honour in *Phineas*, that must be *imputed unto him for Righteousness, among all Posterities for evermore*. The very same Thing done with Reluctancy, and after much Instigation, and with a colder Hand, had been destitute of the Ornament, and unworthy the Reward.

THE utmost Glory of *Elijah* shines forth in this short Character, *I have been very JEALOUS for the LORD GOD of Hosts*. And there is nothing upon Record that redounds more to *David's* Honour, than the Expressions of his Zeal in preparing a Place for the Ark of the LORD: *I will not come within the Tabernacle of mine House, nor climb up into my Bed: I will not suffer mine Eyes to sleep, nor mine Eyelids to slumber, neither the Temples of my Head to take any Rest*. True Zeal will break through all Opposition, and Difficulties, and Discouragements, sustain all Inconveniencies with Alacrity, and render us restless and dissatisfied till we engage in the *Work and Labour of Love*.

WITH such Eagerness and Earnestness do all good Men constantly approach the Throne of Grace, in

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Publick and Private Devotions; with such Eagerness and Earnestness do they embrace all Opportunities of performing Works of Charity and Compassion; with such Eagerness and Earnestness do they press forward unto every Good Work, for the Advancement of GOD's Honour, and the Benefit of Mankind. And whosoever does not find himself affected with this necessary and blessed Disposition, should bewail the Imperfection and Deadness which he still labours under, and incessantly implore the Communications of the Spirit of GOD, that he may be actuated with the Holy Flame, and become *Zealous of Good Works*.

THE Particulars, which have been illustrated, do bear so near and plain a Relation to the Occasion and Purposes of this great Assembly, that your Thoughts must needs run easily into the Application of them. For as we may safely attribute the Character of *Good Works*, to those Charitable Provisions, which we have now under Consideration; so we may with equal Propriety, approve and recommend the *Zeal* of those Charitable Souls, which have engaged in this good Work, and which have been earnest and eager in their Desires and Endeavours, to propagate and carry it on to Perfection.

'TIS not more evident, that the Advancement of GOD's Honour, and the Benefit of our Brethren, are proper Ends of good Works, than it is, that those great and glorious Ends are duly answer'd by that Education, which is given in the *Charity Schools*, to those helpless Children, whose Happiness it is, that you justly regard their Misery.

Is not that Work manifestly and highly conducive to GOD's Honour, wherein 'tis provided, that the

Image of GOD, originally stamp'd upon Man, shall not be intirely wore out and finally disappear, but be renewed and restored to Beauty and Lustre in great Numbers of those, on whom it must otherwise have remained miserably defaced and neglected: Wherein 'tis provided, that that noble Soil, which must otherwise have been barren and unfruitful, or over-run with Tares and noxious Weeds, shall be abundantly Cultivated, and Inriched, and Productive of a glorious Harvest: Wherein 'tis provided, that those Souls, which had otherwise been exposed an easie Prey to evil Spirits and evil Men, shall be reduced from the Snares and Captivity of Satan, and become at once the Witnesses, and the Instruments of the Glory of GOD: Wherein 'tis provided, that those, whose Voices had otherwise been turn'd into Strains of Profaneness and Blasphemy, and all Iniquity, shall be qualified to bear a blessed Part, as your Ears have heard this Day, in melodious and moving Sounds of Praises and Thanksgivings to GOD, preludes to the Transporting *Hallelujahs*, which shall be Sung by the Choir of Heaven, before the glorious Throne of GOD for ever: Wherein 'tis provided, that the various Circumstances of Benefit in *the Nurture and Admonition of the LORD*, shall be properly and diligently applied and improved, *for the Furtherance of the Gospel*; and that the *Temples of the Holy Ghost* may be multiplied: Wherein 'tis provided, that those who, even in the Land of Promise, might yet continue *Strangers unto the Covenant of Promise*, shall be taught betimes the Necessity of building Christian Lives upon Christian Principles, that they may not dishonour GOD, by denying or neglecting
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that *Faith*, which he hath required as the necessary Foundation of Morality under the Gospel, and the indispensable Condition of Salvation: Wherein 'tis provided, that the Glory of GOD may shine forth in this great Article of it, the Effect of this gracious Promise, which the Holy Spirit hath laid great Stress upon, *All shall know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them*; And, wherein 'tis provided, not only that the Doctrines of the Gospel may be inculcated and embraced at present, but that they may be handed down with Advantage to succeeding Generations. GOD is pleased to express a particular Approbation and Acceptance of that Solitude for his Honour, which *Abraham* testified, by transmitting a Sense of Religion to his Posterity. *Shall I hide from ABRAHAM that Thing which I do, seeing that all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, that they keep the Way of the LORD.*

THERE is indeed this Difference betwixt your Endeavours to Propagate Religion, and those of *Abraham*; that Yours do want the Support of Paternal Authority, which his had; but there is this Difference also, that your Solitude in promoting GOD's Honour, and deriving the Blessings of Religion upon Times to come, cannot possibly be the more binding or confirm'd by the additional Ties of natural Affection, as the Patriarchs possibly might. The Children which you are qualifying to convey Religion with Safety and Success unto Posterity, are Yours purely by Adoption.

BUT still the Honour of GOD, though it be your *Principal* Aim, is not the sole Inducement to your glorious Enterprizes and Designs. You are pursuing some other Ends, but those such as, next to GOD's Honour, should lay uppermost in the Purposes of all wise and good Men, and do both justify and demand your Zeal. For your Prospects are, the special Advantages of those, whom you take into your Protection, and the general Benefits of the Community.

THAT the Designs and Management of the Charity-Schools are justly calculated for the special Advantage of those who are so happy as to be taken into them, cannot be doubted, and will not want to be proved, till it shall cease to be universally granted by Mankind, that Knowledge and Industry, good Manners and Modesty, Probity and Piety, and all Kinds of Virtue, with the Blessed Consequences of them, in this and a future State, are preferable to Ignorance and Idleness, Rudeness and Impudence, Dishonesty and Impiety, and all Kinds of Vice, together with those Varieties of Mischief and Misery, which flow from these impure Fountains, and must unavoidably flow from them for ever.

AND if any Nation under Heaven should be so far removed from the common Sense of all other Nations under Heaven, as not to perceive that its Prosperity and Glory do very much depend upon a Design adapted, with no less Prudence than Piety, to the Extirpation of Vice and the Advancement of Virtue; such a singular Race of Men would not easily be thought to deserve so high a Blessing, which they know not how to esteem.

IF Virtues be, in the Nature of Things, the firmest Sinews of Society; and moreover, that Kingdom, which provides most effectually for the Support and Honour of Religion, hath the best Title to Divine Favour; What Blessings may we not expect from Heaven, if this beautiful Branch of Charity should but spread and flourish, and the Shadow of it become a sacred Shelter to the Land?

THIS Design is of so great Consequence to Religion, perhaps of greater Consequence than any other Design which hath been set on Foot since the Reformation, that if it should happily be espoused by the Publick, and become National, it might, in the Event, prove a just Reason of our Hopes, that GOD will bestow upon us all the publick Blessings which are promised to Righteous Nations.

LET our Enemies then trust in their Spears and their mighty Men of Valour, and leave all Concern for GOD's Honour out of their Schemes and their Counsels; let us but provide for the Propagation of his Holy Religion, and we may safely leave the Issue of Things to his gracious Disposal. Let us then continually add to the Numbers of such Innocents as are here before us, Evidences of your abundant Love to them, and to their Saviour; and therefore qualified to appear as most proper and acceptable Advocates in your Behalf, before the Throne of Grace, and you will have no great Reason to dread the Might or the Machinations of your Enemies. For, *who shall harm you, if you be, in this eminent Sense, Followers and Supporters of that which is Good?*

IF therefore any Persons should happen to become Audacious enough to oppose this excellent Design of
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promoting GOD's Honour, they would have too much Reason to fear, that he may *get himself Honour upon them*, in a Sense not very agreeable to them, as he *got himself Honour upon Pharaoh and all his Host*. And the propitious Dispensations of Heaven, which are the only safe and immoveable Foundation of every Government, do so much depend upon the Success of this charitable and pious Design, which is manifestly, and in an high Degree, subservient to GOD's Honour, that whosoever meditates the least Opposition or Obstruction to it, may justly be suspected, whatever plausible Pretences he may urge in his own Favour, of meditating malignant and pernicious Purposes against the *Government*; and whosoever proceeds to an actual Opposition to this Design, does in Effect act in Conjunction with those who have actually *drawn their Swords* for the Destruction of the King and Constitution. For that Imputation may properly fall upon those who dare to *set their Mouth against the Heavens*, and by confounding the Instruments and Means of National Piety, provoke the most High to pour down his Judgments upon the Nation.

INDEED if any particular Persons concerned in this great Design should, by any Kind of Iniquity or Enormity, become Obnoxious, Reason and Religion require, that they should suffer condign Punishment, in common with other Offenders. And a peculiar Infamy would rest upon them, who are happily engaged in so sacred a Design, if they should upon any Account, be found in the Number of *Evil doers*. But still, neither the *Demerits* nor the *Deserts* of particular Persons, can alter the Nature of

of Things: The Cause which is sacred, ought to be accounted inviolable still; and every Man's Obligations, not only to dread the Thoughts of opposing it, but to espouse and promote it, and that with Constancy, and Zeal, and Delight, are still the same, still indispensably incumbent upon him.

FINALLY therefore, Let other Mens Neglect of this good Work be answer'd by your earnest Concern for it; let their Coldness be answer'd by your Zeal; and let their Opposition to it, If it be possible for such an impious Opposition ever to arise, be repell'd and defeated by your Activity in providing for its Support and Accomplishment. And let all those join with you in your holy and indefatigable Labours, who would evince that their Professions of Religion are not purely Formal, and Superficial, and Hypocritical; who would faithfully bear their Part, with all other created Beings, in displaying the Glory of their Creator; who would act correspondently to the glorious Privileges vouchsafed them in the Gospel, and testify that CHRIST is in them of a Truth; who are really affected with the Love of their Country, and a Desire of its Peace and Prosperity; who do truly wish to see the Number of those who shall be saved continually encreased, to be themselves in that Blessed Number, and to be the Blessed Instruments of encreasing it; and who are influenced by the Laudable, and Pure, and Spiritual Ambition of *shining as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever.*

Now

Now to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen.





A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

MAY 21. 1719.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By THOMAS SHERLOCK, D. D.

Dean of Chichester, and Master of the Temple.

2 C O R. IX. 12.

*For the Administration of this Service not only
supplieth the Want of the Saints, but is abun-
dant also by many Thanksgivings unto God.*



O take in the full Sense of the Apostle
upon this Subject, the 14th Verse ought
to be read together with the Text; and
then the whole will run thus: *For the
Administration of this Service not only supplieth the
Want*

350 Dr. SHERLOCK'S *SERMON*,

Want of the Saints, but is abundant also by many Thanksgivings unto GOD; And by their Prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding Grace of GOD in you.

THE Occasion of these Words was in short this: The Apostle had been making Collections among the Christians of several Countries, for the Relief of the poor distressed Brethren in *Judea*; and intending shortly to visit *Corinth*, he sends before him an Exhortation to them, to be in Readiness to answer the Hopes and Expectations which themselves had raised in him, that he should receive a large Supply at their Hands. The Chapter of the Text is intirely spent in this Argument: The Apostle introduces it with excusing his Writing upon this Subject, since he knew how forward they were on their own Accord, and how much their Zeal had provoked and stirred up others to be liberal; but then from this very Circumstance he justifies his Application to them, and urges them in a very powerful Manner to make good their fair Promises, lest haply if they should after all be found unprepared at his Coming, both he and they should be *ashamed in their confident Boasting*. I should not have taken Notice of this Argument, made use of by the Apostle to stir up the *Corinthians* Charity, which is not indeed founded on the Nature of the good Work it self, or in the Promises of the Gospel, but for the Sake of observing to you, that it is not only lawful, but laudable, to make the natural Passions and Inclinations of Men subservient to the Cause of Virtue and Religion; that 'tis no Way unbecoming a Preacher of the Gospel to apply to that Sense of Shame, to that Love of Credit and good Re-

Report, which GOD has implanted in Men, to be perpetual Incitements to Actions Virtuous and Praiseworthy. These Motives however must be kept in their proper Place; we may recommend, but they cannot make a Duty; the Ground of our Obedience lies deeper. The Honour of GOD, the Good of our Brethren, the Care of our own Happiness, are the Springs from whence all Duties flow; and though we may consider these as distinct Heads, yet they always unite in one Stream, and run together without Division: For whilst we do Good to others, we do Honour to GOD, and take the best Care of our selves: And the Honour we have for GOD, will as naturally shew forth it self in the Love of the Brother-hood, as it will certainly end in our own Happiness.

FROM these Principles the Apostle exhorts the *Corinthians* to set forward the Charity proposed to them with a liberal Hand, assuring them, that it would be abundant to the Honour and Glory of GOD, thro' many Thanksgivings; that it would supply the Wants of the Saints; and that it would return to them in Blessings, through the Prayers that would be offered to GOD on their Behalf.

WE must not imagine that these Principles are peculiar to Works of Charity and Beneficence, for they really extend to all Parts of our Duty; all Religion is derived from them; and there is nothing we are bound to, but as it relates either to the Honour of GOD, or the Good of Mankind, or our own Welfare.

IN treating therefore of this Subject, I shall consider,

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First, How these Principles influence Religion in general.

Secondly, How plainly and evidently they lead us to Works of Charity and Mercy.

Thirdly, I will shew you how effectually they do conspire to recommend to us that good Work, for the Promoting of which we are this Day met together in the Presence of GOD.

First then, LET us consider how these Principles influence Religion in general.

MAN is a religious Creature, in Consequence of his being a rational one; our Obligations to do right arise from the natural Powers with which we are endowed, to distinguish between right and wrong; and when in any Case, in which we are concerned to act, our Reason discovers to us what is right, it at the same Time unavoidably fixes our Duty and Obligation.

IT is but too plain, that to know and feel the Obligations we are under, is one Thing, and to comply with them in Practice, is another; all wilful Sinners feel the Obligations they are under to do right, and yet are carried by other Inducements, which have greater Force upon their Minds, to do wrong: And where Men comply with their Duty, it is not always, nay, it is perhaps but rarely, for the Sake of that natural Light of Reason only, which creates the Duty; but for other Reasons, which affect their own Interest and Convenience. And this shews the Difference between

tween the Principles, and the mere Motives of Religion.

A rational Mind ought especially to be influenced by the Power of Reason; and if we could separate Men from the corrupt Passions and Affections which hang about them, the same Light of Reason which shews them their Duty, would sufficiently move and influence their Wills to Obedience; in which Case the Principles and the Motives of Religion would be exactly the same; and the Act of Obedience would be sincere and pure, and of the same Kind with the Light of Reason from which it flows. Such Obedience as this, is in the highest Degree rational and religious; and tho' Laws, both humane and divine, are guarded with Hopes and Fears, yet the Workings of such Hopes and Fears cannot add to the Religion of such Obedience; unless you suppose that there is more Religion in being moved by our Passions, than in being conducted by the clear Light of our Reason and Understanding.

WHEN once a Man has attained to the Knowledge of GOD, and of the Relation he bears to him, and feels the natural Obligations from thence arising to love, honour, and obey his Maker; tho' other Considerations may come in with good Effect to incline his Will to his Duty, yet no other Considerations can add to his Obligations, or make the Duty of Obedience more a Duty, or more an Act of true Religion, than it was before: For he who honours and obeys GOD, because he knows that GOD ought to be honoured and obeyed by him, his Creature and his Servant, acts upon as high, and as true a Principle of Religion, as a rational Mind is capable of.

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THE *Second* Principle of Duty, which is the Love of our Neighbour, may be considered in two Views, either as it results from the common Relation which all Men bear to GOD, or from the Relation which Men bear to each other: In the first View, to love our Neighbour, is properly a religious Act, and Part of the Duty we owe to GOD; and he knows but little of GOD and his Attributes, who cannot from thence discern, that to do Good to our Fellow-Creatures, is an acceptable Part of Obedience to him; that to vex, injure, and oppress them, is injurious to him, the common Father and Maker of all Men.

BUT besides this; could we suppose Men to forget GOD, without forgetting themselves, and losing the Reason with which they are endowed; the very Light of Reason, assisted by the natural Faculty of what is right and wrong, would oblige Men to use each other with Justice and with Tenderneſs: For Reason it ſelf is a Law to a reaſonable Mind: And in the preſent Caſe, you muſt either ſay, that it would be altogether as reaſonable an Act in a Man, who believes not in GOD, to murder an innocent Child, as to nourish and ſupport it; or you muſt allow that Reason alone in this Caſe makes a Difference, and creates ſuch an Obligation as a reaſonable Mind muſt ever be ſenſible of, and inclined to follow. I wou'd not call this a religious Obedience, but 'tis Obedience to the Law of our own Minds; and could we be ſo ſtupid as to forget the Hand which planted this Law in our Hearts, yet whiſt the Law it ſelf lives in us; that is, as long as we continue to have Reason and Senſe, ſo long ſhall we feel the Obligations we are under in Obedience to it; ſo

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long shall we be dissatisfied with our selves, for acting contrary to what we see, and know, and feel to be right and becoming.

BUT join these two Considerations together, and you see into the very Source of all the Obligation a Man can be under to do Good to his Fellow-Creatures. We can consider Men only as they stand related to us, or as they and we stand equally related to GOD, our common Father; and under these Views we may discover whatever we owe to Man for his own Sake, or for the Sake of GOD who made him; and discern the whole Compass of our Duty with Respect to the *Second* great Branch of it, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

LET us then proceed to the *Third* Thing, viz. The Love of our selves, and our own Happiness; and consider how far this will, and ought to influence our religious Obedience.

It is very evident from the common and universal Sense of Mankind, that the Desires of Life and Happiness, are Impressions which come from the Author of Nature; and consequently that to follow these Impressions, and to act in Pursuance of them, is according to Nature, and agreeable to the Will of GOD, the Author of them. It is reasonable for a Man to be concerned for his own Happiness; and since the Will of GOD can never contradict right Reason, it is consonant to the Divine Will for Men to act upon this Principle, the Care of themselves and of their own Welfare. This Concern for our own Happiness, is a very strong Principle of Action in us, and when duly pursued, within its proper Bounds, a very justifiable one: And tho' in Strictness of Speech it cannot be

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termed a Principle of Religion, because the Reason of our religious Obedience is not to be resolved into Self-Love; yet considering the strict Union which GOD has made between our Happiness and our Duty, the Concern for our own Happiness, when duly regulated, will always be a powerful Principle of Action in Matters of Religion.

THE natural Care and Concern therefore which all Men have for themselves and their own Happiness, is the great Source from which the Motives of Religion are deduced: And the Reason why this natural Principle of Action does often furnish very powerful Motives to the Cause of Vice and Irreligion, is no other than this, that Men often, through the Corruption of their Affections, judge amiss of their Happiness, and pursue those Things as pleasant and profitable, which are really pernicious and destructive. In which Case Men are not to be blamed for pursuing their own Happiness, but for the Corruption of their Hearts, which makes them place their Happiness in the Things the most contrary to it. For since GOD made Man to be happy, and has endowed him with Reason, to discern wherein his true Happiness does consist, it must needs be agreeable to the Will of GOD, that Man should endeavour to attain that Happiness, for which he was intended. The Consequence of which is, that it is no Blemish to our Obedience, that we are moved by the Considerations of that Happiness, which GOD has made to be the Reward of it.

To judge rightly therefore of the Motives upon which Men act in their religious Concerns, we must judge of the Nature of the Happiness they propose

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to themselves; and this, I think, we may admit as a Rule in this Case, that as long as Men seek after that Happiness which is natural and proper, and intended for them by GOD, so long they act upon Motives agreeable to the Will of GOD.

THE Happiness in which Men are capable of having any Share, or for which they have any Desires, is either that which belongs to this World, or that which belongs to the World to come: That future Rewards are proper Incitements to Virtue and Religion, is plain from hence; that GOD has proposed them as such, and sent his only and well-beloved Son into the World to *bring Life and Immortality to Light thro' the Gospel*. But these future Rewards do not alter the Nature of Religion, or give GOD a better Title to our Obedience than he had before; they contain not the Reasons and Evidences of the Obligations we are under to the Supream Creator, but they are added as proper Movements to the Will and Affections of Men, and to raise their Minds above the Temptations of this World, which so easily beset them. The particular Rewards promised in the Gospel, being Matter of divine Revelation, to reject them, is Want of Faith; to admit them, is an Act of Religion towards GOD, with Respect to that Faith, which is the Foundation of our receiving them; but with Respect to the Influence of the Rewards themselves, they do not make any Thing to be a religious Duty, which is not so in it self; they do not make any Thing cease to be Religion, which was Religion before.

As to the Happiness of this present Life, we can, I think, as little question whether GOD intended Men to be happy here, as we can, whether he intends

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them to be happy hereafter: The natural Desires of Men after this Happiness, the necessary Connexion between Virtue and Happiness, and the Goodness of GOD towards his Creatures, will not permit us to make any Doubt of it: And if GOD intended Men for Happiness here, to pursue this Happiness by the most justifiable Means, *i. e.* by the Means of Virtue and Religion, must needs be agreeable to his holy Will; and consequently the Prospect of the Peace and Tranquillity of this Life, is a proper Motive to Religion.

UNDER the old Law, we find the Promises of this Life were exprelly made to religious Obedience by GOD himself; a Demonstration, I think, that the *Motives of this World* are not in their own Nature destructive of *religious Obedience*. Long Life, temporal Peace and Prosperity in the flourishing Condition of their Country, fruitful Seasons, and plentiful Harvests, are Inducements always proposed to the *Jews* to keep the Commandments: Nor may we pretend to say, that these Promises were peculiar, and only proper to the *Jews*, unless we think that it was peculiar to the *Jews* to desire long Life, Prosperity, and Plenty: For Motives founded in natural Desires must be as extensive as the Desires themselves; and having been propounded by GOD as *Motives of Religion* to one Nation, it shews they are proper for *all*. The *Jews* had indeed an exprels Promise of temporal Felicity if they continued obedient: Other Nations, if they believe GOD to be the Governour of the World, must have Assurance of the like Reward; for to suppose GOD to govern the World, infers his Care of a religious, obedient People: And therefore our Saviour gives

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gives it as an Instance of Want of Faith, where Men distrust the Goodness of GOD in providing for them, whilst they endeavour to serve him. But further; even under the Gospel we are assur'd, that *Godliness has the Promises of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

To encourage our selves therefore in our Duty and Obedience, with the Hopes that GOD will reward us here with Life, Health, and Prosperity, is no Blemish to our Religion; but is indeed an Act of Faith in GOD, as Governour of the World; and a proper Inducement to make us, in all we say or do, to look up to him, who is the Giver of every good and perfect Gift, both in this Life and in the next.

OUR Saviour reckons but two general Heads of Religion, the *Love of GOD*, and the *Love of our Neighbour*; but the Second of these plainly infers another, the Love of our selves. A corrupt and irreligious Affection can be no Rule of Duty; and if we are bound to love others according to the Measure of the Love we have for our selves, 'tis evident at least that we *may*, consistently with the Nature of Religion, love our selves, as much as we are *bound* to love others: And since 'tis our Duty to promote the present Ease, and Happiness, and Prosperity of our Neighbours, it must be agreeable to the Mind of our blessed Saviour, that we should take the same Care of our selves: And if this be a lawful Care, it must needs be allowed that it is never better employed than when it makes us obedient towards GOD, in Hopes of his Favour and Protection.

HAVING now, if not too largely, yet at least as far as the present Occasion will give Leave, endeavour

voured to clear the *First* Thing propos'd; I shall proceed to the *Second*; namely,

How plainly and evidently these Principles lead us to Works of Charity and Mercy.

He that oppresseth the Poor, says the wise King of Israel, reproveth his Maker: but he that honoureth him, hath Mercy on the Poor.

THE Poor are the Creatures of GOD, not only as they are Men, but also as they are poor Men: The different Orders and Degrees of Men are from the Hand of GOD; and to despise or oppress a Man for being what GOD has thought fit to make him, is to reproach GOD: And if we have a true Honour for GOD, the common Father of both Rich and Poor, it will dispose us to regard even the Meanest of his Children. The Rich are the elder Brothers of the World; and as they share the Estate of it among them, so is it incumbent on them to provide for the Necessities of the rest of the Family; which they can hardly neglect, without renouncing the common Relation they have to one and the same Parent; so that to shew Mercy to the Poor, is a direct Way of paying Honour to GOD.

BESIDES; Works of Mercy redound to the Honour of GOD, through the Praises and Thanksgivings of those, who feel the Comfort and Relief of them. The Charity of the Rich, thrown into the Lap of the Poor, ascends up in more delightful Streams than the Incense of the Altar, and returns again in Showers of Blessings upon the Head of the Liberal. The unexpected Relief which the Indigent meet with, naturally creates in them a great Sense of Providence, and of the Care of GOD over his Creatures; it raises them to

a thankful Acknowledgment of his Regard towards them, and disposes them to a religious Dependence on him in the midst of all their Distress. So that in this Sense also Works of Charity tend to the Honour of GOD, as they promote a true Sense of Religion in the World.

THAT the Good and Welfare of Men are directly consulted by the charitable Hand, is too plain a Case to admit of any Proof: And great Pity it is, that there is any Room to doubt whether this End be always attained by the Liberality of well-disposed Persons: But so it is, that too great a Part of what is given in Charity in this rich and populous City, instead of being a Supply to the Want of the Saints, is the Nourishment of idle and debauch'd Vagabonds: A Case the more to be lamented, because the frequent Impostures of this Kind make good People distrustful of all who ask for Charity, and sometimes bring great Difficulties upon the well-deserving Poor. Under these Circumstances, we can no otherwise answer this End of Charity, the doing Good to others, than by taking some Care to place our Charity right; and to distinguish between the truly Needy, and the idle Beggar, who lies in wait to intercept Charity, and to divert the Maintenance of the more deserving. But however we may be imposed on in this Respect, yet in that which follows, I trust there is no Fear of being deceived; for though the wicked Receiver of Charity shall answer for his Guile and Hypocrisie, yet the Liberality of the Giver shall not go unrewarded: For,

3dly, BY Works of Mercy and Charity, we make the best Provision for our own present and future Happiness. This may be concluded by direct Inference
from

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from what has been already said; for since Works of Mercy have so plain a Tendency to promote the Honour of GOD, we cannot doubt but that GOD will reward the Love and Obedience of such as take Pleasure therein. Add to this, the express Promises of the Gospel made to these good Works especially; insomuch that Cloathing the Naked, Feeding the Hungry, giving Drink to the Thirsty, Visiting the Sick, and the Prisoners in their Distress, are mentioned by our Blessed Saviour as chief Articles of Enquiry at the last great Day; and are put into the short Description which St. James has left us of *pure and undefiled Religion in the Sight of GOD*; add this, I say, and we have all the Security that can be desired or expected.

THE final Retribution for this, and every other Work, must be expected from the Justice of GOD, in that Day in which he hath appointed to judge the World; but this hinders not but that we may justly hope for Part of our Reward in this Life. In the Chapter of the Text, the Apostle encourages the *Corinthians* to Liberality, by teaching them to expect a Return for it from GOD, in the Increase of their Stores, and a plentiful Harvest of the good Fruits of the Earth: this Reward he earnestly prays they may have: --- *He that minisseth Seed to the Sower, both minister Bread for your Food, and multiply your Seed sown.* The Apostle wrote to Christians, and doubtless he made Use of none but *Christian Motives*; and upon his Authority we may venture to promise to the charitable Christian a suitable Reward, as well in the Blessings of this Life, as of that which is to come. But 'tis Time to proceed to the last Thing proposed:

To

To shew how effectually these Considerations conspire to recommend to us that good Work, for the Promoting of which, we are this Day met together in the Fear of GOD.

IF to supply the temporal Wants of the Brethren, be a Work redounding to the Honour of GOD; behold these numerous Objects before you, all wearing the Liver of Charity, not as a Badge of Servitude to any earthly Master, but as a Token that they and their Benefactors are equally Servants to GOD; Nor are their present Wants and Necessities the only Concern of this pious Institution; but a Foundation is laid for the constant Support of them and their Families, by Training them up, and disposing of them to such useful Employments as may yield them a comfortable Maintenance for their Lives; so that this Charity, like the *Widow's Cruse*, will always recruit it self; and the Bread to be earn'd by these many Hands, in Time to come, shall be placed to the liberal Man's Account, as the Growth and Product of his Beneficence, and be a Memorial of his good Works daily renewed and offered up in the Sight of GOD.

BUT the Supplying the temporal Wants of the Poor, is not the only, nor the chief End of these Institutions; they have another View, which more directly regards the Honour and Glory of GOD; the instructing of Youth in the Principles of Virtue and Religion, and teaching them to know GOD betimes, and the Obedience owing to him: And if providing for the temporal Wants of the Poor shall be esteemed an Honour paid to GOD, how much more shall this Charity be so esteemed, which is dedicated expressly to that End? the chief Business of which is, to fill the Mouths of
Babes

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Babes and Sucklings with the Praises of GOD, a Sacrifice which he will not despise. To instruct undisciplin'd Youth in the Principles of Faith and Obedience, what is it but to extend the Dominion of GOD over his Creatures; to *turn the Hearts of the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just*, and to *make ready a People prepared for the LORD*; to conquer the Powers of Darkness, like good Soldiers of CHRIST; and to lay up in Store for our selves more than the Conqueror's Crown? But, *Secondly*,

THE Argument has the same Advantage with Respect to the *Good* of those who are the immediate Objects of this Charity: It has this in common with other Charities, that it is a Supply for the Wants of the Poor; it has this above many others, that it is a Provision against future Wants; But its chief Glory is, that it is a Provision not only for the present Comforts of this Life, but also for the Happiness of that Life which is eternal; by rescuing the Poor from that Contagion of Vice to which they are so fatally exposed, for Want of due Instructions in their Youth: 'Tis this Want which has filled the Streets with idle Vagabonds and Beggars; many of whom know nothing of *the Lord who bought them*, except only his Name; nor had they known that, but meerly for the Use of it in the common Forms of Begging. Lastly,

As to your selves, the Encouragers, the Supporters of this good Work, GOD is your Reward: And as the Charity you are engaged in, has all the Marks of a just Regard to the Honour of GOD, and of a tender and christian Concern for the present and future Happiness of your Brethren; so need you not doubt but that the

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Promises of the Gospel shall be justified unto you, both in this Life, and in that which is to come. Go on therefore, and faint not; if your Work be attended with Difficulties, they shall serve only to increase your Reward. Let it be the Care on your Part, *That your Good be not evil spoken of*; and if Offences come, (and they must needs come) *Wo to them by whom they come.*

BUT that this Charity may in all Respects be above Reproach, and answer the Ends proposed by the liberal Benefactors; I earnestly recommend it to those who have the immediate Care of these Children, to be watchful over their Behaviour, and constant and diligent in the Discharge of their own Duty. The Success of this Charity depends in great Measure upon their Fidelity: Men of Fortune and Business in the World cannot attend so closely as to observe every Thing that passes; This Care therefore must rest upon those, who have more immediately the Inspection of these Schools. And let them remember, that they receive the Pay of Charity; and that they cannot neglect their Duty, without adding this Aggravation to their Crime, the Abuse of one of the noblest Charities of this Age.

AND now; May that GOD, whose Honour you are labouring to promote; whose Children these are; who are supported and instructed by your Charity, prosper this Work in your Hands; and raise up fresh Supplies for the Administration
of

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of this Service : May he minister Bread for your Food, and multiply your Seed sown, and increase the Fruits of your Righteousness. *To him, &c.*



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S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *SEPULCHRE*,

JUNE 9. 1720.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *JAMES KNIGHT*, D. D.
Vicar of St. *Sepulchre's*, London.

Pfal. LXXII. 4.

He shall save the Children of the Needy.



THE Person spoken of, according to the Opinion of the learned *Jews*, and the full Meaning of the Words of the Psalm, is the promised Messiah, the Son of *David*, the King of *Israel*, and the Saviour of the World.
The

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The Persons delivered by his Power and Goodness, are the Children of the Poor. And the Time of Deliverance is an *evil Time*, when Iniquity abounds, and the Circumstances of the Poor call for the Favour and Protection of Providence in a special Manner; for none are delivered from Good, but Evil.

IN treating of the Text, I shall, *first*, consider what are the Characters of an *evil Time*.

Secondly, I shall shew that the best Means of correcting the Evil, and reforming the Age, is a special Care of the Education of Children.

Thirdly, THAT the Reformation proposed, is more to be expected from the timely Education of the Children of the Poor, than the Children of the Rich.

Lastly, THAT the Prophecy of the Text is partly fulfilled, and Salvation wrought to the Children of the Poor by such Education.

First, I shall consider what are the Characters of an *evil Time*. No Time is *evil* in it self, but in Respect of the Manners and Opinions of Men, and the Consequences of them; who being all born with the Effects of the Sin of their first Parents, by Reason of which they are prone to Vice, and liable to Error; and *the whole World lying in the wicked one*, 1 John v. 19. as St. *John* tells us, or under the Influence of the wicked Spirit; the *Time* or Period from the first Sin, to the last Transgression, may be called *evil*. But besides this, *a Time is evil* in a special Sense, when Iniquity is advanced to a full Stature, when the Measure of Sin is ready to overflow, and the Judgment;

ments of GOD are beginning to afflict and punish the Offenders. Such was the Condition of the old World in the Days of *Noah*, when *all Flesh had corrupted his Way*, and GOD had determined to *destroy* them with a *Flood*, Gen. vi. 12, 17. Such the Condition of the *Jewish* State in the Days of *Eli*, 1 Sam. iii. 1, &c. when none was fit to stand before GOD but the Child *Samuel*, and *the Glory of the Lord* was ready to depart from a wicked People, 1 Sam. iv. 11, 21. And such the Condition of the same Nation in the Time of CHRIST, when Children were moved by the Spirit of GOD to say, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, Matt. xxi. 15, 16. and pay the Honours, and *perfect the Praise*, which their Priests, their Elders, and their Rulers denied him.

At such Junctures, Error and Sin, which have long sculked in the deep Recesses of the Heart and Mind, usurp the Privilege of Righteousness and Truth, and shew themselves openly and confidently to the World. The Corruption of the *Jews* was great and universal in CHRIST'S Days, and his Successors the Apostles; the Chief of the Priests were Sadducees or Infidels in the great Articles of the Resurrection of the Body, Immortality of the Soul, and Rewards and Punishments in another Life. The contrary Sect, which confessed these, yet had no Faith in the Son of GOD; no Belief that the Words he spake, were the Doctrines of Truth; nor the Miracles he wrought, the Effects and Demonstration of Divine Power. The Letter of the Law was retained and appealed to by both Parties, but the Spirit lost or greatly perverted with their own Opinions. And howsoever they differed in other Matters, yet in this they agreed, to

oppose CHRIST, persecute the Church, and suppress the Gospel at its first Appearance and Publication to the World. The Greatness of Mind which Religion inspires, was sunk into Covetousness, and a mean Concern for the chief Places in publick Assemblies, and a Share in the Esteem and Praises of Men. For these Ends, and not for the Honour of Almighty GOD, their spiritual Profit, and the Good of others, did they frequently fast, disfigure their Countenances, offer up Prayers, distribute Alms, and perform the outward and visible Part of Religion and Virtue; cherishing the Sins at the same Time which they seemed to mortify; breaking the Commandments of the GOD they worshipped; and purchasing the Name of bountiful and good, by relieving the Poor with the Spoils of the Rich, and the Fruits of their Hypocrisie. For their Heart was proud when their Body was prostrate; their Fasts ended in devouring the Houses of the Orphan and Widow; their Zeal for Religion chiefly consisted in teaching for Doctrines the Traditions of Men; and the Treasures of Knowledge were neglected and forgotten for the Sake of the Riches of this present World.

THIS was the Condition of the better Sort, whose Lips were obliged to preserve Knowledge, and whose good Conversation should have guided others in the Way of Virtue. And what was the State of the rest of the *Jews*, whose Minds were instructed and their Manners formed by their Doctrine and Example? Can we possibly think that the Men of Parts, when the Doctors of the Law were Sceptics and Infidels, would turn Advocates for religious Truths, and employ their Wit in asserting and defending them?

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Was there any Hope that the Rich of this World would exchange their Treasure for a better Interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, while the Keys were managed in the Hands of such, whose Ambition and Covetousness evidently shewed, that they had little Concern for the Riches and Glory of another World, if they could but succeed in their Projects and Endeavours for obtaining the Preferments and Honours of this? Was there any Prospect that Virtue and Truth should flourish and abound, when external Forms were become the Conditions of obtaining Happiness, and every Man's Opinion, howsoever absurd, howsoever influenced by the Force of Passion, and grounded on a weak and undisciplin'd Mind, was the Light he walked by, and presumed sufficient to conduct him to it? And what Vice might not have been practised, according as the Interests and Complexions of Men directed and disposed them, where the Fear of GOD and the Love of Virtue were not the chief and prevailing Principle? The State of the Nation at this Juncture is thus described by the Apostle St. Paul, Rom. iii. 10, &c. *There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth, and seeketh after GOD. ——— Their Throat is an open Sepulchre; ——— Their Mouth is full of Cursing and Bitterness. Their Feet are swift to shed Blood. Destruction and Misery are in their Ways: and the Way of Peace have they not known. There is no Fear of GOD before their Eyes.* A State that expresses the utmost Corruption, and ended at last in the Ruin of their Government, and the Captivity of the People.

BUT before the last and finishing Stroak of Divine Justice, a Day of Grace was allowed to the *Jews*,
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Mercy interposed in the Son of GOD, and Salvation was offered from the approaching Evil and everlasting Death, on the reasonable Terms of Repentance for Sin, Obedience to Righteousness, and Faith in CHRIST, whose Commission was sealed with the evident Tokens of Divine Power. But few were qualified to receive the good Tidings, and comply with the Terms of Forgiveness and Salvation, but the Poor of the People, whose humble Condition would not admit of Schemes of Pleasure, and ambitious Views, which divert the Mind from better Pursuits. The Troubles they experienced, and the little Comfort they enjoyed here, disposed them to attend to, and embrace the Promises of a better Life; for the Doctrine of the Cross could be no Scandal to Men inured to Poverty and Hardships, and void of the Passions of the Proud and Luxurious. And their lowly Minds being less infected with the Errors of the Age, than the Rich and Learned, were better disposed to receive the Light of the Gospel of CHRIST, and believe the Testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Wonders and Signs that were wrought by him. For such like Reasons as is very probable, and others known to the Wisdom of GOD, more than to Man, was the Gospel received with the greatest Success by the Poor and Needy; as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28. *To see your Calling, Brethren, how that not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But GOD hath chosen the foolish Things of the World to confound the wise; and GOD hath chosen the weak Things of the World to confound the Things which are mighty; and base Things of the World, and Things which are despised, hath GOD chosen, yea, and Things which*

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are not, to bring to nought Things that are. Nay, these were the Persons, the Salvation of whom, so far as appears, was principally intended by the coming of CHRIST, and his preaching the Gospel; for, says he, in Answer to the Question sent him by *John*, Matt. xi. 4, 5. *Go and shew John again those Things which ye do hear and see: the Blind receive their Sight, and the Lame walk; the Lepers are cleansed, and the Deaf hear; the Dead are raised up, and the Poor have the Gospel preached to them;* that is, both real poor, and mortified Persons reduced in Spirit to the State of the Poor; and accordingly we find that he chose his Disciples out of poor Fishermen.

THIS was the Method which CHRIST took to reform that corrupt and degenerate Age. He preached to the Poor, to the lower Ranks and Orders of Men, who were best qualified to receive his Word. He founded the Gospel in the Meekness and Simplicity of the Poor and Humble, that the Truth might ascend in Process of Time to the Thrones of Princes, like the great Deluge to the Tops of Mountains; *and the Earth might be full of the Knowledge of the LORD, as the Waters cover the Sea*, Isa. xi. 9.

BUT, *Secondly*, In relation to our selves of the present Age, who want the Demonstrations of Divine Power that recommended the Ministry of the Son of GOD, the Education of Children is the best Means we can possibly think of to prevent the Progress of Error and Sin. Experience convinces us of the great Difficulty of striving with the Corruptions and Inclinations of Men. An undisciplin'd Childhood produces an headstrong and ungovernable Youth; for the

Principles of Sin, which have not been restrained, increase in Strength as the Person advances in Age and Stature; and delude his Mind, which is yet unexperienced in the Nature of Things, with imaginary Prospects and Hopes of Happiness; and influence his Passions, that are strong and impetuous, to pursue Objects, which he is qualified to enjoy, thro' Quickness of Sense, and Vivacity of Nature, with the utmost Pleasure. It can hardly be expected that the Gospel of CHRIST, a Doctrine of Self-denial, that lays a Restraint on these early Sallies of Sensuality and Sin, and comes upon Youth as a North-wind on the forward Spring, should be well received: Except it be then, when present Distress, the Effect of Indulgence, and Divine Grace co-operating with it, softens his Heart, awakens Reflection, and renders him willing to attend to Truths, which, by teaching him Patience under lesser Troubles, prevent or remove the Occasions of greater. If we proceed to Men of a middle Age, we shall generally find that their Habits are confirmed, that they are fixed in Schemes of Profit and Pleasure, and embrace Principles that are best fitted to their different Views and Manner of Life. The Rich, who are full of the Comforts of this World, will have little Relish of a spiritual Good they are not accustomed to, *for the full Soul loatheth an Honey-comb*, Prov. xxvii. 7. The Wise and the Learned, who build on Opinions and Righteousness of their own, will hardly believe that the Greatness of their Knowledge can admit of Increase, or the Exactness of it, of any Correction from the Skill of others: *If ye were blind, saith CHRIST, ye should have no Sin: but now ye say, we see; therefore your Sin remaineth*, John ix. 41.

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And the Men of Business are diverted and amused, some with their Farms, others with their Cattel, and those with their Merchandize. If we proceed farther to *Multitude of Tears*, the aged Sinner, whose Iniquities are multiplied more than his Days, who stoops towards the Grave and Destruction together, and whose hoary Hairs should be outward Signs of Maturity in Goodness, Righteousness and Truth, will scorn to submit to the Reproof of those, whose Number of Years is inferior to his own, tho' the Sum of their Knowledge and Virtue be greater. And should Age and Infirmary, with other Events, dispose any for the Impressions of Grace, and the Work of Repentance, they are rather converted for their own Sakes, than the Good of Mankind; having little Strength, Ability, and Leisure to reform the World, which they are ready to forsake; and being only capable of making Amends for the Scandal of their Lives with a few late, and sorrowful Reflections, disregarded by the Young, and considered by most as the Effect of Necessity, and not of Choice.

THE Hope then of amending a degenerate Age is principally placed in the Education of Children, whose Condition qualifies them to receive, obey, and preserve Instruction: For there are no Errors in their naked Minds to obstruct the Entrance of necessary Truth; nor any Vices rooted in their Souls, to divert their Will from the Practice of it; but their empty Faculties earnestly call for their proper Accomplishments; the Mind for Truth, to acquaint them with the Cause and End of their Being: The different Natures of Good and Evil: Their Duty towards God, their Neighbour, and themselves: And the Rewards and Punish-

ments of another Life: And the Will and Affections, for the Power and Grace to struggle with the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; to turn away their Eyes from beholding Vanity, and their Ears from hearing and delighting in Sin: To moderate their Appetites: Controul their Passions: And proportion their Desire of temporal Good to their real Wants, and not the Representations of a boundless Fancy. Their Weakness and Ignorance render them willing to submit to the Authority, hearken to the Instructions, and obey the Commands of their Parents and Governours; and their needy Souls are tenacious of Knowledge, a Maturity in which is necessary to conduct them in their riper Years thro' the Troubles of Life.

THE Hopes of Success from these early Beginnings are great and promising. For Sin is unnatural to the Soul of Man, which was formed at the Beginning in the Likeness of GOD, or made to express his Perfections in its own; but how is it possible to express his Perfections without the Assistance of Virtue and Truth? The Devils are capable, as well as Man, of thinking, and willing, and performing Acts in Consequence of them; but doing nothing in the Light of Truth, and the Power of Virtue, are the dark Reverse to the Beauty and Brightness of the Image of GOD. And in this Respect, the Children of Satan and the Children of GOD are frequently opposed the one to the other; and Deserters from Sin to the Church Militant, are said to recover the Image of GOD, *Col. iii. 9, 10. To have put off the old Man with his Deeds, says the Apostle, and have put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.* If then the Soul was created in the Like-

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ness of GOD, if the State of Sin be a State of Violence, if it tends and struggles to recover this Likeness thro' the Power of Grace, and the Likeness consist in Truth and Virtue, as it is written, *Eph. iv. 24. Put on the new Man, which after GOD is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, or, Holiness of Truth*: It will then follow, that the Soul was made for Virtue and Truth; that they are natural to it; that its Faculties crave them as their proper Accomplishment; that the Soul of the Child will embrace and retain them as the Stomach its Food; will mix them with its Powers, and digest, and convert them into Life and Spirit, preventing thereby the Growth of Error and the Habits of Sin; as wholesome Food subdued and dispersed thro' the several Parts and Channels of the Body, preserves Health, encreases Strength, and advances the Child in the Fulness of Time to the Stature of Man.

It may so happen, that the Children of vicious and debauch'd Parents may be sometimes born with a stronger Bias to Perverseness and Sin, than is usually observed in young Children; they seem to go astray from the very Womb; they portend Mischief to themselves and others; and like monstrous Births, are the Shame and Reproach of those who begat them. But the greater Evil they threaten to the World, the greater Care must be taken to prevent it. This bad Disposition is still the Disease and Aversion of the Soul, which naturally struggles to conquer and expel it; for every Thing strives by an innate Power for its own Perfection; and wholesome Discipline, supported by the Grace of Almighty GOD, which is ever ready to per-

perfect his Work, and concurring with the inward Efforts of Nature, is a powerful Remedy, which the Principles of Sin cannot withstand, if it be early applied, administred with Prudence, and repeated with Patience. It cannot be conceived that there is any Evil introduced by Sin, which has not an Antidote appointed of Providence, and fit to subdue it; for that GOD is willing to perfect by Grace, the Work begun in the Infancy of Man, appears from the Goodness of the Son of GOD, who embraced in his Arms and blessed the Children who were brought unto him; *Mark x. 16.* instructing us thereby, that the Almighty Arms are always open to receive Children, his Power ready to cover and protect them, and his Blessing of Love to expel the Curse to which they are subject as Children of Wrath. I speak of those that are taken into Covenant by solemn Rites; a Benefit enjoyed by the Children assembled in this Place of Worship. If any Thing hinders their Prosperity and Happiness, it is Man's Fault, who neglects to bring them, or endeavours to discountenance their coming to CHRIST; as slothful Parents, who think it sufficient to provide for the Backs and Bellies of their Children, without the Pains of instructing their Souls; careless Masters, who are more intent on their own Profit than the Childrens Improvement; vicious Parents, who hating Virtue and Religion themselves, and fearing Reproach from the better Life and Understanding of their Children, shew an Averseness to their good Education; and injudicious Masters, who are more solicitous to educate Youth for the Business of the World, than adorn their Souls with spiritual Knowledge, or bring them to CHRIST, the *Way* and the *Truth*.

Truth. Had the Parents neglected to have brought their Children to the Son of GOD, or the Apostles hindred them from coming to him, he could not have embraced and blessed them as he did; but he approved the one, who were forward to bring them, in Trust of his Goodness; and rebuked the other, whose mistaken Zeal attempted to repel them; a Lesson to the World, that GOD's Blessing is always ready to assist Children in Proportion to their Wants; that nothing can prevent it but the Fault of Man; and that Man's Endeavours rightly concurring with Divine Grace, are a sufficient Remedy to prevent the Dominion of the Power of Sin in the Souls of Children most inclined to it.

THE Reason given by the Son of GOD, for receiving Children, is worth our considering; *Forbid them not*, says he, *for of such is the Kingdom of GOD*, ver. 14. Simplicity and Innocency, which qualifie Persons for the Kingdom of Heaven, recommended them to him. For, says he, *Whoever shall not receive the Kingdom of GOD as a little Child, he shall not enter therein*, ver. 15. And on another Occasion, *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little Child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. xviii. 2, 3, 4. That is, it becomes the Saints to direct their Eyes to the Throne of Grace, and depend on GOD in Simplicity and Faith, being thoroughly sensible of their own Insufficiency, for the future Blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven: As the Eyes of Children wait on their Parents for the Goods and Necessaries of this present Life, without carking, and in full Confidence

dence of their Care for them: And as Children are humble, having no Accomplishments to give an Occasion to Conceit and Vanity; no Knowledge of their Birth and Quality to make them proud, and Despisers of others; no Envy at their Fellow's Happiness; no Ambition and Desire after Honour, Riches, and Reputation, which have no Place in their childish Understandings; and no malicious and destructive Designs on the Person, Peace, and Prosperity of their Neighbour; and as no Calamities and Troubles of Life arise from simple and infirm Infants; so those whom the Wisdom and Goodness of GOD has appointed Heirs of his heavenly Kingdom, are all adorned with this humble, innocent, and child-like Disposition, that excludes the Grounds and Occasions of Strife, and secures the Peace of the Kingdom of Heaven. And if Men in Age, Stature, and Knowledge, must be first reduced to the Meekness, Innocence, and Dependence of Babes, before they can hope to receive the Rewards and Honours of Heaven, it is no wonder that the Son of GOD, the Heir and Ruler of his Father's Kingdom, should embrace Children with so great Affection, and shed his Blessing on their tender Souls, as most fitly disposed for the Power of Grace in this present Life, and the best qualified, in Respect of their Simplicity, for the choicest Blessings in his Reign of Glory.

SINCE then Children are free from the Prejudices and Passions, that retard or hinder the Improvement of the Adult in Virtue and Truth; since their Souls are cleansed in the Sacrament of Baptism from the bad Effects of their native Pollution, and the Soil is prepared for the Seeds of Righteousness, Goodness, and

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Truth; since they naturally crave them as the first Appearances of the Image of GOD, for which they were created, as the Pledges of Perfection, and their future Happiness, and their Light and Strength to conduct them safe through the Tryals and Difficulties of this present Life; since they are fit Subjects of the Favour and Blessing of Almighty GOD, which he therefore bestows, that the Innocency and Simplicity in which he delights, may be always retained, and continually improving; Can any one say, that the Souls of Children are not disposed for the Impressions of Grace, more than the Wills and Understandings of Men? Nor the greatest Hopes of reforming the Wickedness of a degenerate Age, placed in their early and good Education? If this be performed, Virtue and Knowledge steal into the World without Observation; the Work of the Spirit goes on and prospers, without the Noise, Opposition, and Strife, which Persons meet with, who attack the Vices and Errors of Men; or, like *Solomon's* Temple, without the Noise of Axes and Hammers. The Foundation of Religion is laid in the Depth or Beginnings of Man, and there is great Hope it will come to Perfection in the Fullness of his Stature; is laid in the Dawnings of the next Age, and before its Decline will probably be finished in Beauty and Strength. Were *This* carefully and universally practised, it could not be long e're the World would be astonished to find it self righteous, and Goodness and Truth would bring up the Rear, and supplant the Folly of former Generations. But since such a Blessing cannot be looked for, while Parents and Guardians have less Concern for the spiritual

tual Welfare of their Children and Minors, than they have for their temporal, I shall shew,

Thirdly, THAT the Reformation of a corrupt and degenerate Age is more to be expected from the Children of the Poor, than the Children of the Rich. In Respect of the Children, their Circumstances are alike in Nature and Grace, being both capable of moral Improvements, and the Blessing of GOD; but the Difference lies in the Difference of Education. The Rich and the Honourable, who have spent their Time in a Circuit of Pleasure, or the restless Pursuit of Power and Wealth, are apt to train and bring up their Children with the same Views which themselves have entertained, and the same Taste of fashionable Pleasure which they have long delighted in. Their greatest Concern is, to give the Accomplishments which may please and recommend them to Men of Character, Influence, and Power, and qualify them for Trusts, Profits, and Honours, which they hope their Birth and Merit may procure them. In this Management, it is natural to think that their Principles are framed and calculated for their Interest, and Truth and Religion are so far impressed, as they do not interfere with their several Views. But the Case is otherwise with the Poor and Indigent; their contracted Circumstances will not admit of Schemes of Diversion, and Projects of Greatness. Their real Wants are the Measure of their Cares. The supplying of these is their constant Employment. And they have no Views for their Children after them, but to gain a plain and honest Subsistence. In this Condition, to lessen the Toils which the Wants of their Children daily create them, and open the Prospect of a better

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Subsistence than themselves can give, they are willing and ready to consign them to the Care and Management of such, whose disinterested Zeal for the Glory of GOD and the Good of Souls will give them an useful and religious Education; an Education that consecrates the first Fruits of their Years to the Service of GOD, as a Pledge and Earnest of their whole Life, and provides next for their bodily Wants and future Subsistence, by putting them into a Condition to get their Living by honest Industry; fulfilling thereby the Precept of CHRIST, *Matt. vi. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdom of GOD, and his Righteousness, and all these Things, that is, Food and Raiment, and the Necessaries of Life, shall be added unto you.*

THERE is nothing here that obstructs the Design of the pious Benefactors. The Children themselves having no Hopes of a better Provision from their needy Parents, will pay the more ready and chearful Obedience to their good Instructors. And the poor Parents knowing the Good which the Children receive, and will probably reap, in Process of Time; and their own Inability to instruct their Souls, and timely provide for their temporal Happiness; and the Will and Capacity of their Patrons and Masters to perform every Thing that their Wants call for; will use their Authority, not to discourage, but perfect the Work which they are piously doing, and supply the Want of a greater Service, by compelling their Children, when they prove remiss, to submit to so prudent and wholsome a Discipline. By this Education they are taught their Duty in Simplicity and Plainness, without Reserve and the corrupt Mixture of worldly Policy; and may bless GOD for the Meanness of their Circumstances,

stances, which so well fits them for the sincere Milk of Righteousness and Truth.

IF there be any Hope of reforming the Age, where doth it appear with more Probability than in this Undertaking? The Meanness of the Persons, their low Station, their Want of Interest when they come to Age, and apparent Unfitness to influence Persons of superior Station, is no real and solid Objection to such Expectations. The Gospel at first was principally received by the Poor and Simple, yet ascended at last, thro' their exemplary Goodness, and GOD's Grace, and that at a Time when Miracles were rare, to the Orators, Lawyers, Critics, and Philosophers; and to sum up all, to their very Emperors. Their Prayers, Patience, Fidelity and Virtue, were of great Force with Almighty GOD to convert Enemies into Friends and Protectors; and the like Effect may still be presumed to be capable of following the like Behaviour in the Poor and Humble. Let us not then despair, but the Word of GOD may as well reform as convert the World in the Dress of Poverty, in which it appear'd in the Person of CHRIST; and *the Feet of the Poor, and the Steps of the Needy*, Isa. xxvi. 6. may tread down the Empire of Sin and Satan, as well as *Babylon*. And if the Treasure hid in these earthen Vessels, the Children of the Poor, be concealed from any, it is hid to them whom the GOD of this World hath blinded and deluded.

Fourthly and Lastly, THE Prophecy of the Text is partly fulfilled, and Salvation wrought to the Children of the Poor by such Education. *He shall save the Children of the Needy*, says the Psalmist. For they

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are saved and delivered from the Vices and Errors of the present Age, from the fatal Contagion that is spreading apace thro' every Rank and Condition of Men, from Infidelity in those, Prophaneness in these, and Indifference in others. They are saved and delivered by the Son of GOD, working on their Souls by the immediate Impressions of his Holy Spirit, or exciting generous and compassionate Minds to snatch them as a Brand out of the midst of the Fire; to rescue them from Sin, as a Remnant preserved to lay the Foundation of better Times, and convey Simplicity to succeeding Ages. Thus did he deliver the Children of the *Jews*, who were poor and afflicted, by the *Hebrew* Midwives. Thus did he save and exalt *Moses*, the Hopes of his People, and the Avenger of their Wrongs, by the merciful Daughter of the cruel *Pharaoh*, bringing *Sweetness out of the Strong*, and curing the Wound with the Sword which gave it. And what Honour is it to be thus employed, like the Son of GOD, in Works of Salvation, while others are busie and subtle to corrupt, like the great Destroyer? What Honour is it to the worthy Gentlemen, who so happily began, and so well have conducted this important Project, to take the Work of Almighty GOD into their Patronage; to build on the Foundations of Nature and Grace, which himself hath laid; to contribute their Care to rear that to the Stature of Man, which was formed an Infant; to water the Seeds of Virtue and Knowledge, hidden in the Soul, and make it delightful like the Garden of GOD, the heavenly Paradise? Go on, my Brethren, in the Work of the LORD, which prospers in your Hands; the LORD is with you, and your Reward is with him. Who can

tell, but the Life you prolong, the Comforts you convey, and the Grace you procure to these poor Innocents, may be found at last in Multitude of Days and Fulness of Blessing on your selves and your Posterity? Who can tell, but your own Issue may rise like the Cedar, and spread like the Oak, for your tender Care of these *Lilies of the Valley*, which the LORD delights in.

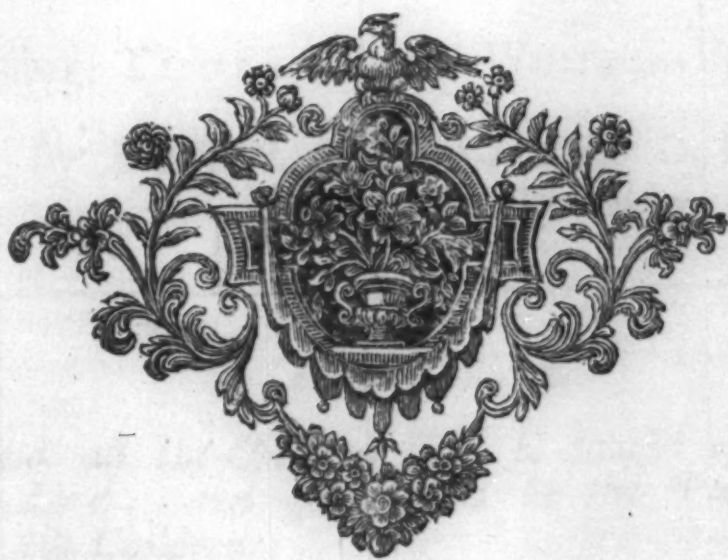
THE Increase of the Poor in these difficult Times enlarges your Province. *Your Faithfulness in a little has procured you much*; Go on and prosper, and gain you Authority over many Cities. Let the Rich rejoice that he is made low, if his Children be brought under your Tuition; and the Poor remember his Poverty no more, who feels his Prosperity in the Kindness you shew to his helpless Progeny.

SINCE then the Harvest is great, and the Work prosperous, and the Prospect of Advantage large and inviting, let us all concur to forward this Design; The faithful Trustees, by continuing their Care; the generous Contributors, by seasonable Supplies; and the watchful Masters, by the various Methods of improving Youth in Virtue and Knowledge. Who can tell but well educated Children may cry *Hosannab to the Son of David*, Matt. xxi. 15, 16. when the Learned and the Aged will not acknowledge him, or conspire to betray him. Or should Sin prevail, and the Ministers of the Word be forced to complain like the Prophet *Jeremiah*, saying, Chap. v. 4, 5. *Surely these are poor, they are foolish: For they know not the Will of the LORD, nor the Judgment of their GOD. I will get me unto the great Men, and will* speak

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Speak unto them; for they have known the Way of the LORD, and the Judgment of their GOD: But these have altogether broken the Yoke, and burst the Bonds. Should this be the State and Condition of the Church, and Children be neglected, the Remnant left to glorifie GOD by a good Education in Times of Defection, Luke xix. 40. That may be fulfilled which CHRIST affirmed in a like Case, saying, I tell you, that if these should hold their Peace, the Stones would immediately cry out.



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A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *SEPULCHRE*,

JUNE 1. 1721.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *NATH. MARSHAL*, D. D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

ISAIAH LIV. 13.

*And all thy Children shall be taught of the
Lord; and great shall be the Peace of
thy Children.*

 N the preceding Chapter our Evangelical
Prophet had been pointing to the Death
and Sufferings of CHRIST, to the Triumphs
of his Cross, and to the *Satisfaction of his Soul* in be-
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holding the blessed Fruit of his Labour and *Travail*. Hereupon the Prophet proceeds to observe, with very just Order and Connection, what Occasions would hence arise of Thanksgiving and Praise to GOD, for the Manifestation of his Light and Truth to the *Gentile* World, which had so long been *barren* and *desolate*, *alienated from the Life* and the Knowledge of GOD, ver. 1.

AN happy Reverse of this forlorn Condition is here foretold to them; that for *Darkness*, they should have *Light*; for *Affliction*, *Comfort*; and instead of being *tossed with a Tempest*, should be *established in Righteousness*, 11, 14.

AND the Amount of these several Promises is summ'd up in the Words just now recited to you, which (as St. *John* hath told us) were applied by our Saviour to this very Purpose, to the Instructions vouchsafed by GOD to Man, thro' the Ministry of our great Mediator, John vi. 45. *It is written* (saith he) *in the Prophets, and they shall all be taught of GOD; every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

THE Season reminds us of those *miraculous* Instructions which the Church of CHRIST received from her divine Founder; when, under the more immediate Guidance of the promised *Comforter*, she enjoyed the Privilege of divers *extraordinary* Vouchsafements, was led by him *into all Truth*, and assisted by him in all Abilities for a Practice corresponding to it; when *great Sinners* were instantaneously converted into *great Saints*; and when Persons, entirely unacquainted with the common Methods of humane Learning, had the *Eyes of their Understanding enlightned* from Above;
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so that *Tongues and Prophecies* became on the sudden as familiar to them, *all Mysteries* and *all Knowledge* as easie and as open to them, as if they had been trained up to these several Attainments by a previous Course of Study and of laborious Enquiry, in the usual Forms of a learned Education.

BUT tho' the *Foundations* of the Christian Church were laid in *Miracle*, and *extraordinary Measures* of the *Spirit* were necessary to the Support of her in her *Infant State*; yet upon *her fuller Growth*, and upon the *Settlement* of those *Foundations*, the *Edifice* since built on them hath been enabled to subsist, by the Help of such *standing Provisions*, as have been severally made for it; and by fit Applications of them to any incidental Exigence, thro' the Care and Wisdom of the prime Architect.

WHEREFORE, that we may be just to the Season, we will,

First, IF you please, Consider those *standing Provisions* consign'd to the Church of CHRIST, thro' the Ministry of his Spirit, which my Text hath propounded to her under one General View; *All thy Children shall be taught of the LORD.*

AND that we may be just to the Occasion of our present Assembly, I must intreat you to consider with me in the

Second Place; THE Usefulness of these Provisions, with a peculiar Regard to the Case before us; which the latter Branch of my Text hath intimated in the

following Words; *Great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

THE Season indeed might claim from us a more distinct Attention to those *extraordinary* Vouchsafements, upon which the *Original Fabric* of the Christian Church was form'd and founded: But as the *Settlement* of it was owing to these, and we are now in Possession of the Advantages thence derived to us; whilst we are acknowledging the Blessings of the *one*, it will scarce be possible for us to lose Sight of the *other. e. g.*

I. Do we enjoy the Benefit of a standing Revelation, which is *profitable* to us *for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*, 2 Tim. iii. 16. and in all the various Methods of saving Grace? With our Sense of the manifold Advantages hence accruing to us, it will be difficult for us to forget thro' what Hands and Means the mighty Blessing was at first convey'd to us; with what miraculous Assistances it was then supported and defended against all the Terrors of this World, and all the fierce Opposition to it of *Spiritual Wickedness in high Places*: Whereupon it will be easie for us to graft this obvious Reflection; that it had been a Miracle equal to any, which in Fact appeared to patronize and protect the Gospel, to have found it succeeding and spreading its auspicious Light, without the Help of *other Miracles* to propagate and diffuse it: For, that Men unacquainted with Tongues and Languages, should address themselves *effectually* to a Diversity of People, so various in Speech, in Manners, and in their Forms of Worship; that Men of no natural Talent in the Powers of Perswasion, of a Na-
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tion contemptible, and themselves of no Figure in it, should be able to dispossess any considerable Numbers of inveterate Customs, of Notions deep rooted, of a Religion favoured by Education, strengthened by Civil Sanctions, founded, *presumptively*, in *divine*, and supported *unquestionably* by *human* Authority; I say, that such great *Ends* should be accomplished by such disproportioned and feeble *Means*, must unavoidably remind us of that supernatural Help, which display'd the *Strength* and the *Power* of *GOD*, in the *Weakness* of Men his Instruments. The *Foundation* and the *Superstructure* have here such a strong and evident Connection with each other, that a Separation of them, even in Thought, is next to an Impossibility: They cleave as closely, and are as intimately allied together, as *Effects* to their *Causes*; 'twere a *Solecism* in *Speech*, and an *Absurdity* in *Reasoning*, to put them *asunder*. Were it not for the Signs and Wonders which accompanied the Gospel at its first Appearance, the Voice of it must have soon been stifled, in the noisy *Contradiction* of *ungodly Sinners* to it. So that if the Will of *GOD* hath now an easie and clear Access to us; if we are directed by it in the Methods of our Worship; if we are rescued by it from Ignorance and Error; if we are assisted by it in the Solution of our Difficulties and Doubts; if they who *hunger and thirst after Righteousness* are filled by it; *Matt. v. 6.* if they who *labour and are heavy laden* find Rest to their Souls by it, *Matt. xi. 28, 29.* if the Full and Pamper'd are humbled, or the *Meek and Lowly exalted* by it; in fine, if the Notices of Life and Immortality are clear'd up and ascertained, or if the *Wrath* of *GOD* be revealed from Heaven by it, *against*

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against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men,
Rom. i. 18. these several Advantages must be all imputed to that propitious Spirit, thro' whose mighty Agency this great Wheel of Providence was first put into Motion, and hath ever since been directed, assisted, supported, conducted thro' the various Chances and Junctures of this World, to the Conclusions appointed for it in the Councils of Eternity.

GREAT and apparent was here the Want; and great was therefore the Mercy of supplying it. Now, by consigning to us a Revelation of his Will, GOD hath manifestly consulted the *Peace of his Children*, who, without it, amidst the purest and best Intentions of pleasing him, were plainly ignorant of the Means to do it. Never did *human Reason* display its Powers to greater Advantage in all other Matters; never since the Foundations of the Earth were laid, was there an Age of greater Delicacy and Politeness, or of *Tast* in what the World calls *Wisdom*, than when the Gospel was propounded to the Notice of Mankind: The utmost Trials had then been made of what *human Knowledge* could do for us in the Way of *Religion*: But how deformed and monstrous was the Face of it, how corrupt and abominable was its whole Form and Fabric, even then, when the Talents of its Votaries were of the brightest Sort, from whom all Attainments might well have been expected, which were within the Reach and Compass of the most elevated Understandings? The *Case* is well known, and you will only need to be reminded of it; That in the Age of *Augustus Caesar*, Learning and Arts were just in their *Zenith*; in all the Glory and Beauty of their fullest Bloom: Yet very contrary to the

the common Observation, was then the Fact of Things; *Ignorance* and *Superstition* were so far from going Hand in Hand, that *Bigotry* went along with *Learning*, and even adventured to shew it self in the clearest *Sunshine of humane Knowledge*: Which surely may be allowed to pass with us for some Argument, that *human Knowledge* is alone no proper, or, however, no sufficient Key, for opening to us the Truths of Religion. *Virtue* had indeed many fine Things said of it, and its *Beauties* were set off in a very beautiful Manner. But tho' good *Sense* might recommend, and fine *Discourse* embellish it; yet there was wanting the *Authority* of express Command, and of weighty *Motives*, to overcome the Difficulties of *Practice*, and to give it the Force and Efficacy of *Law*.

AND whilst the Guilt of unexpiated, uncancell'd Disobedience, hung pointed, like a Sword, over the Head of each terrified Offender, and no just Dependance could be fixed upon any Methods then known for healing it; there could be no great Encouragement to engage with Hardships, or to enter with Steadiness upon the Conflicts of laborious Virtue, whilst, I say, no tolerable Assurance could be had of Success to any Labours, and whilst no Measures were settled, for the Payment of a vast and well known Arrear. But now from all these Perplexities and Discouragements the Gospel of CHRIST hath happily delivered us; who hath opened to us the *Mystery of his Father's Will*, in so clear a View, and pointed it with such awakening *Sanctions*, that the *Peace*, of which Doubt and Diffidence must needs have robbed us, is settled and established for us, by the Lights and
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Assurances which that gracious Dispensation hath convey'd to us.

AGAIN, 2dly, If the Ordinances of the Gospel, thus notified to us, have any Use in them, any Efficacy attending them; if our Intercourse with Heaven be maintained by them in a regular and proper Channel; if our Prayers and Praises ascend to the Throne of the Almighty, with the more gracious Acceptance, for proceeding in the Forms thence authorized, for being favoured with the Interest of an all-sufficient Mediator, and sanctified thro' the holy Influences of his Blessed Spirit; we cannot but ascribe it to the Glory of his Grace, that he hath thus opened to us, and settled the *Means* of it; that we are not left, as the *World long* was, and much of it *still* is left to the Vanity of humane Imaginations, or to the Falacy of our own Inventions; but that a *Clue* is given us from Above, to lead us out of a *Labyrinth*, which hath ever proved too perplexed and intricate, for any Measures of this World's Wisdom; that our Worship is now establish'd upon the sure Bottom of a federal Stipulation; so that if with clean Hands and pure Hearts we look for our God in his holy Sanctuary, we are entituled to find him there, and finally to behold his *Power and Glory*. Had this whole Matter been left upon the Foot, where *untaught Nature* found it, *Experience* is instead of all other *Conviction* to us, what *poor Improvements*, indeed what infinite *Defilements*, Religion hath evermore derived from *Nature*, unassisted, uninstructed, by *Grace*, tho' at the same Time adorn'd and embellish'd with all the Refinements of *human Art*. Sensible of her Nakedness, she would needs, forsooth, be always *diligent*, always even *anxious*, in providing some Sort of

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Cover for it; but the Success was uniformly and constantly unfortunate; since the *Cover* thus officiously sought for, proved either so *thin*, as to be quite *transparent*, and consequently *useless*; or else so *thick* and *stifling*, that true Religion could never *breathe* thro' it. Whereas the Ordinances prescribed to us by the Gospel, have so adjusted the Plan of our religious Worship; so directed the Formularies of our approaching to GOD in holy Offices, that the *Bondage of Corruption*, under which the *whole Creation had long groaned and travailed in Pain together*, is now exchanged for the *glorious Liberty of his Children*, Rom. viii. 21, 22.

TAKK a View of Mankind in their sordid and low Endeavours to please and to propitiate they knew not *whom*, nor *how*; bungling at various Offers of Attonement, the Necessity of which they well and generally apprehended, tho' they understood no proper Methods for it; and you will easily imagine how dark and how confused their Notions and their Hopes must needs have been, from Practices, which, whilst *innocent*, were, however, *unauthorized*, and usually, instead of cancelling any *past*, contracted for them *new* and repeated Guilt.]

BUT now what the common Reason of Mankind did generally inform them, was fit and proper to be done, tho' it did not, and could not delineate for them those particular Methods, by which it might be done, with any Prospect of Acceptance, the Gospel hath clearly and fully opened to us. We have now a *federal* Right to all its Advantages, if we will *ask* them *in his Name*, thro' whom they are derived to us, and will pursue them thro' the Channel of his Ordinances,

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nances, which are fixed and known, and require no Subtilties or Depths of Thought, to carry us thro' a sober and effectual Use of them.

MEN of Genius and Speculation, too fine for the Grofs of Practice, may improve, if they please, upon the Model of GOD's Appointments; may form their thin and airy Schemes of a Religion which shall be all *mere Spirit*, without any one Ingredient which shall favour of *Sense*, or indulge our present Composition of *Flesh and Blood*. But *Experience* and *History* will concur in assuring them, that all this Notion is wild and visionary; that human Nature hath ever insisted upon somewhat of *Form* and *Ceremonial*, and where it hath not found *some Rule* of this Sort prescribed for it, hath ever *exceeded all Rule* and Measure in it. So that there was an evident Necessity of fixing somewhere, and of prescribing some *Ritual*, if Religion were to be kept within any Bounds of Purity and sober Reason. And therefore what the general Voice of Mankind hath, in all Ages, most contended for, such (*e.g.*) as an *authorized Mediator*, a *satisfactory Attonement*, some solemn *Rituals* of *Initiation*, and of *preserving*, or *restoring Peace* between the *offending Votary*, and the *offended Object* of *his Worship*; (*these*) the Gospel hath settled for us in *stated Ordinances*, the Use of which Modesty and Gratitude will recommend to us, as the wise Appointments of a merciful GOD, for his weak, and frail, and sinful Creatures.

OR, 3^{dly}, If a successive Ministry, *ordained for Men in Things pertaining to GOD*, Heb. v. 1. duly authoriz'd to denounce his Threats, and proclaim his Promises, and to publish the Conditions whereupon *both*

are

are suspended; warranted to speak in his Name, to *reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2. if this (I say) hath any Tendency to remind Men of their Duty, to promote and encourage the Discharge of it, *to pull down the strong Holds of Sin*, or to preserve the great Depositum of the Gospel; the Derivation of all our Powers for these important Purposes, must finally be carried back to the same Original, the prime Minister of our Saviour's Kingdom, the *Spirit of Grace and Glory*. It was not in *Man*, it was not within the Compass of *human Authority*, to prescribe the Means of our Acceptance, or the Instruments of procuring it, or the Hands thro' which it should be *ministerially* convey'd to us. The Work is GOD's; and as he hath appointed *standing Ordinances*, thro' which he will *generally effect* it; so he hath appointed a *standing Ministry*, thro' which he will *generally transact* it: And bold, as the boldest, is that presumptuous Invader, who with unauthoriz'd, sacrilegious Hands, shall adventurously rush upon holy Ministrations! Not only the Gospel, as a *revealed Institution*, forbids it; but even the *Light of Nature*, dim as it is, may be clear enough to inform us, that a Warrant from GOD, either by *Original Call*, or by *due Course of Succession*, must be essential to the Regularity of any one's acting for him.

How far the *Innocence of involuntary Error* may avail on the Behalf of those who can truly plead it; what Allowances shall be made to it, or what Degree of *Efficacy* shall attend upon Ordinances *irregularly* administer'd; (these) are none of our present Questions: But *Rules*, I think, should never be given up for the Sake of any *possible*, or even *necessary Exceptions*. It
may

may suffice to observe upon the Case before us, that wherever these *Exceptions* shall put in for Favour, the Indulgence of it must be owing to the *Grace* of him who settled the *Rule*, and hath no where told us, when, or how, he will grant a *Dispensation* from it.

WE agree, that it is GOD alone who conveys the Grace which flows to us through any of his *Ordinances*: But then, as one great Design of them was, to keep us within the Enclosure of his Institutions; any voluntary Departure from the known Tract and Channel of them, crosses upon one of their fundamental Reasons, affronts the Authority which appointed them, and gives too great a Loose to those Inventions of Men, and to those Excursions of humane Fancy, which were severally meant to be regulated and restrain'd by them.

THE *Jewish Priesthood* was fenced in with a sacred Enclosure, confining it to one Line or Family. The *Heathen* had known Ceremonials of Initiation into it. And the *Christian Rule* hath a constant Attestation of *Facts* to vouch for it, from its earliest Rise to the present Generation.

WHAT possible Interruptions one or other may have met with in so long a Course, and under such Varieties of *Succeſſion*, is no Prejudice to the *Rule*, which is, and ought always to be consider'd as the same, under any possible, or probable, or even actual *Exceptions* to it. For indeed there is always a Reason why some Rule should be fixed in this Matter; and then, be the Rule in particular what it will, which is once stated and settled, it will always be entituled to this general Reason for it: It is intrinsically, and in it self unfit that it should be left at Random, to the

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the Humour and Caprice of Men, or to the Ignorance of every raw, conceited, untried Pretender. *Order and Decency* plead hard against it, and the Course of *Providence* hath otherwise determin'd it; so that when we find a *Rule* once actually settled for us, all Reason surely will direct us to abide by it. Once more, and

4thly, Do we feel our selves at any Time illuminated, prevented, excited, quicken'd, when no Occasion from *without* us can tolerably account for it? Do we perceive the *Light* and the *Heat within* us, *shining* and *burning* with such equal and just Proportions, that there can be no Room for the Suspicion of any Fraud or Self-delusion? We are here again reminded of his gracious Succours, who *worketh in us to will and to do of his good Pleasure*, Phil. ii. 13. thro' whom *our Souls are purified in obeying the Truth*, 1 Pet. i. 22. thro' whose *Power we abound in Hope*, Rom. xv. 13. by whom we are *strengthen'd with Might in the inner Man*, and are *rooted and grounded in Love*, Eph. iii. 16, 17.

I pretend not to say, that either the *Doctrine* or the *Privilege of inward Assistance* is peculiar to the Christian Church; the Church of GOD in all Ages, and in some of its darkest Periods, hath, I doubt not, enjoy'd fit Measures of it; and both * *Jews* and †
D d Heathens

* Various Passages in the Book of Psalms attest to this Doctrine, as received among the *Jews*; and in very many Instances the whole Tenor of their Addresses to God supposeth it.

† The *Platonists* were full of the same Acknowledgment; and even the Effects of our own *Free Will*, are ascribed by *Hierocles* to the Divine Co-operation, in Words so truly noble, that I cannot forbear transcribing them. *Ἐν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ νοητικῇ ἀπορίᾳ*

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Heathens have evermore laid in a Claim to them; upon which, however, it will be no Disparagement to observe; that as the Spirit of GOD hath vouchsafed to Christians a greater Plenty of *outward Advantages*; so, in all likelihood, he hath dispensed to them a more liberal Proportion of his *inward Helps*; which is nothing but a Specimen of his prerogative Grace, *dividing to every Man severally as he willeth*, 1 Cor. xii.

II. The Want on all Hands was confessed and undoubted: || Writers of all Persuasions have acknowledged it, as the Votaries of all Religions have felt it; and the Christian Scheme hath undertook for a copious and full Supply to it. If we are not *sufficient of our selves to think any Thing as of our selves*; yet now our *Sufficiency is of GOD*, 2 Cor. iii. 5.

HERE I take Leave of my first General, containing a Promise to the *Gentile World*, when incorporated with the *Christian Church*, that *all its Children should be taught of the LORD*; under which we have considered the *standing Provisions* consigned to the Church of CHRIST, thro' the Ministry of his Spirit.

PROCEED we now therefore in the

Second

αἰρεσις τῶν καλῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν θεόθεν ἔχοντες, τῆς παρ' ἐκείνου συνεκείρας καὶ τελειώσεως τῶν αἰρηθέντων πάντας τε χρῆζομεν. A Book, instead of a Margin, might be fill'd with Quotations of this Tendency from *Heathen Writers*, both Poets and Philosophers.

|| Let *Plato* be allow'd to speak in this Case for the rest: τὴν μὲν ἀρετὴν, ὅδ' ἡ καὶ μέγιστον, ἐστὶ συμπάντων καὶ κορυφαίαν, ἐκείνη δὲ διδασκείτω, ἐν μὲν θεὸς ὁφειλότω.

Second Place, To the Usefulness of these Provisions, which the latter Branch of my Text hath intimated in the following Words; *Great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

IN my Prosecution of the former Topick, I have all along interspersed some general Hints concerning the Use and the Advantage of these several Provisions, which were then observ'd to you; that I might hence-forwards confine my self to the more immediate Occasion of our present Assembly.

ONE Thing here premised will aptly enough connect the two Branches of my Text together, taking the *latter* of them in that Point of View, under which I am going to consider it; *viz.* That it is the *Providence of GOD*, which opens a Door of Access to the several Helps and Ministrations of his *Word and Spirit*. The great Increase and Progress of the *Roman Empire*, facilitated a Passage for the first Preachers of the Gospel, and so *opened the Door of Faith to the Gentiles*, Acts xiv. 27. Thro' the same wise and gracious Disposal it comes to pass, that one *Nation* differs from another in the various Opportunities of Light and Knowledge, and of all spiritual Improvements; that under the *same National Advantages*, there is a *Diversity of personal Gifts*, Talents, and Vouchsafements, which as much distinguisheth one Man from another, as if the Species were not the same; one scarce rises above the *Beasts which perish*, whilst another is but *little lower than an Angel*. The Fact is so clear upon the first Mention of it, that the Remark will stand in need of no farther, nor more

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particular Deduction, to convince you, that it is founded in Truth and Justice.

THE Work which brings you now together, is intended to co-operate with *Providence*, in spreading and applying its *manifold Gifts of Grace*; in *revealing unto Babes* those Truths of the Gospel, which the *Wise and Prudent*, in their own Eyes, too often cast from them; in dealing out Instruction to them who *sit in Darknefs*, and in *giving to the Ignorant Knowledge of Salvation*.

THERE is one general Law of *Providence*, which takes hold of all the reasonable Creation; *As you have Opportunity, do Good unto all Men*, Gal. vi. 10. i. e. *all the Good*, which (by any moral Estimate) is within your Power, to *all Men*. So that the *Opportunity*, wherever it fairly opens, fixes the *Obligation*. Now there cannot, I may say, be a more truly useful, nor therefore a more glorious View, than that which is here before you.

THE *Souls* of these little ones, dear and *precious*, be sure, *in the Sight of GOD*, recommend themselves to your Piety and Care. Athirst for saving Knowledge, they implore your Help for the Conveyance of it. If they can ever hope to partake of the Promise which my Text hath given them, that they *shall be taught of the LORD*, it must be through the Agency and Ministry of Man; under the Latitude of which Construction, I trust I may apply to you those Words of our Saviour to the *Jews*; *Luke iv. 4. This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears*.

IN a *lower*, tho' still in *some Degree* of Necessity, comes next before you, their *Subsistence* in a World, where it is the Lot of most Men to scramble for their

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daily Bread. Here you provide for *methodizing*, what otherwise would be a *disorderly* and *wicked Scramble*, by assigning to each a lawful Vocation. It was a Rule among the *Jews*, which passed undisputed with them; *He who brings not up his Son to some Trade or Calling, brings him up to be a Thief.* The Mind of Man will be working *Mischief*, where it is not taught to be working *Good*; nor is it possible that a numerous Poor, bred up in Idleness and Beggary, should be able to procure an *honest Livelihood*; whereas the Poor here before you, by the Measures you now are taking, may not only be furnished, *for themselves*, with a competent Subsistence, but may be enabled to deal out their Help to *others*, and to propagate a never-failing Succession of like charitable Schemes. So that the Children yet unborn, and those who come after them, till Time shall be no more, may feel the comfortable Effects of your present Undertaking. Mean while, let me observe to you in the Words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. ix. 12, 13. that *the Administration of this Service not only supplieth the Want of the Saints, but is abundant also by many Thanksgivings unto GOD: whilst by the Experiment of this Ministration, they glorifie GOD for your professed Subjection unto the Gospel of CHRIST, and for your liberal Distribution unto them, and unto all Men.*

BUT I need not, I am sensible, *expatiate* upon a Subject, which hath already been *exhausted* by the Labours of many worthy Persons who have gone before me. I rather chuse to address my self in a few plain Words, to three different Sorts of Persons, who may very much either advance, or discourage, the Progress of this noble Charity.

1. To such as have not yet thought fit to lend any helping Hand to it. Let me beseech them, that they would think it enough for them to stand *Neuters* in this beneficial Work, that, if they will not *assist*, they would not, however, *hinder* nor *retard* it. In the Execution of a Design so *extensive*, which such Numbers of *all Sorts* are concern'd in, it is neither *impossible*, nor *incredible*, that *some Flaw*, *some Error*, may appear to a *curious* Eye, inquisitive for Mischief, and willing to make the most of it. Nay, it may be farther granted, that even an *impartial Observer* may, possibly, discern some unhappy Blemish, amidst such a vast Variety of Agents and Instruments employ'd in the Conduct of it. It would be next to a Miracle should this be otherwise. But what is then the Consequence? Hath the Undertaking, for the main of it, a serviceable Aspect? Do the Views arising from it promise a Sett of durable, comprehensive Advantages, both to the *present Generation*, and even to *remotest Posterity*? Is there any Charity to be named, which can furnish a better Prospect? Or was there ever any *Good*, which had not its Chance for some *evil Speech* to arise upon^t it, and perhaps for some *evil Effect* to spring out of it? The World must be much alter'd in Situation and in Circumstance, if this be not *now* the Fate, as it hath *ever* been, of *all*, even of the *best*, Things *under the Sun*. And shall we discharge them *all* out of our Care, because we can rescue *none* of them from those accidental Mischiefs, to which every Thing here will always be obnoxious? This would surely be a very wrong Turn of Judgment and of Practice. In GOD'S Name, let the Mischiefs be prevented, which human Foresight can

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can any Way guard against: Let the Errors be corrected, which any Measures of Care may be applied to regulate: And then let the Blemishes be finally *excused*, which, humanly speaking, cannot be quite *avoided*. When all is done; if any *smaller Evil* shall be found mixing at last with a much *greater Good*; they must be very unreasonable in their Demands and Expectations from us, who shall presume to censure us for taking *together* what the Nature and Posture of Things will not always allow us to *put asunder*.

2. To the Persons concerned in the Supervisal, Government, and Conduct of this extensive Scheme; let me address my self in the Spirit of Meekness, and with my truest Wishes of all possible Success to them; that they would use all prudential Endeavours to fence, as far as they may, against any untoward Misconstruction. The more sensible they are of injurious Surmises, and of causeless Jealousies, raised and spread to their Disparagement, the more Caution will naturally be expected from them in the Execution of their important Trust; that *no Occasion of Offence in any Thing* be given by them, lest this their Ministry *should be blamed* for it; that in all Things they would behave themselves with a *Zeal for GOD according to Knowledge*; with an Obedience to the Powers set over them by his Providence, which shall proceed upon steady, well weigh'd, and consistent Principles; and with such a Regard to the Weight and Moment of the Business entrusted with them, as may direct each Step and Motion they shall make in the Dispatch of it. Great is their Charge, and great their Charity in undertaking it; as great will, doubtless, be their Reward for fulfilling it: Thro'

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good Report and thro' *evil*, they must expect to pass, as their heavenly Master hath done before them, whose prudent, inoffensive Conduct, and vast Designs for the Good of Men, prov'd not sufficient to skreen him from the Venom of malicious and lying Lips. Let *his Example* in *doing Good* be the Compass they steer by; and let his Patience in *suffering Evil* be their Motive to bear it without Weariness or Discouragement.

3, and Lastly, LET the Persons to whom the Education and Instruction of these Children are more immediately committed, be perswaded to consider well the Importance of their Employment, and of the Trust reposed in them, together with the Account which they must one Day give of it. It will not be enough to accomplish the Design of this noble Charity, that the Youth under their Care be enabled to deal in Letters, or Syllables, or Words, or Sentences; to answer the common Interrogatories, or to stand the usual Forms of Examination; but the very *Life* and *Power of Godliness* must find a Way to their *Hearts*, if ever they are made *Believers unto Righteousness*. The *Confession* of their *Mouths* is now of little Service, when there is no Danger to approve the *Virtue* of it, except it proceeds from an higher and better Principle, and be the Language of their *Understandings*, as well as of their *Lips*. Nor is even the *Knowledge* of Religion, where it enters deepest, of any great Significancy, except the *Passions* be subdued to it, and each perverse Disposition captivated to the *Obedience of Faith*.

WHEREVER then, any latent *Corruption* of their *Hearts* shall chance to discover it self in their *Speech* or *Practice*; be it in *Idleness*, or in *busie meddling*; in

unseemly Behaviour under any relative Obligations; in *Sturdiness to Superiors*, or in *Insolence to Equals and Inferiors*; in *Neglects of GOD's Worship*, or in *Prophanations of his Honour*; in *Deceit or Violence*; or in any *dishonest Arts*: This will require the more immediate Care of the Persons entrusted with it, to nip, in the very Bud, all such Seeds of Wickedness; to pluck up by the Roots such pernicious Weeds, as will poison the Soil they grow in, and spread all around them their fatal Contagion: Quite other Fruits, they must know, are expected, from the Expences and Toils of those worthy Labourers in this blessed Work, who have committed to them their Part in it; viz. That by Perswasion and Example, by Encouragement and Correction, by friendly Admonitions, and by seasonable Rebukes, the Children under their Instruction may come out of it improved in *Knowledge* as well as in *Utterance*, in *Practice* as well as in *Principle*, in the *Regulation* of their *inner Parts*, as well as in the *Decency* of their *outward Deportment*. Then may they look *backwards* and *forwards* with equal Pleasure upon the *Success* of their *past*, and towards the promising *Prospect* of their *future* Endeavours; that a flourishing Generation is already form'd upon the *one*, and a new one rising with all favourable Appearances upon the *other*; that they have been Agents and Instruments in the Hand of GOD, for bringing forth that *Strength* which he hath *ordained out of the Mouths of very Babes and Sucklings*; have been employed in the honourable Work of conveying to the *Poor* the glad Tidings of the *Gospel*, of *saving the Children of the Needy*; and therefore may humbly
hope

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hope for a Share in the Recompence of those wise Teachers, Dan. xii. 3. who shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and of them who turn many to Righteousness, by shining with them as the Stars for ever and ever.



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Preached in the Parish-Church of
St. S E P U L C H R E,

MAY 17. 1722.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
HUGH, Lord Bishop of B R I S T O L.

GEN. XVIII. 19.

For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.



THE Wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah was now come to its Height, when GOD came down from Heaven to inflict on them that Punishment their Sins so loudly call'd for. In his Way thither he calls on Abraham in the Plains of Mamre,

Mamre, and promises him a Son in his old Age. But before he parts with him, he could not forbear imparting to him the terrible Work he came about, the examining whether the Sin of those Cities were indeed so grievous, and the punishing them accordingly when he found it so. And as in this whole Relation GOD is introduc'd and represented as acting after the Manner of Men; so in particular, in his breaking his Design to *Abraham*, he is set forth as proceeding like a kind and generous Patron towards his affectionate Client, that had the greatest Sense of Gratitude himself, and was desirous to keep up the same Sense in his Family towards his bountiful Protector; and on this Bottom it is that GOD is here brought in prefacing the Account he gives *Abraham* of his Intentions relating to *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, by seeming to argue, that it would be unkind in him to conceal his Counsels from one, for whom he had done so great Things already, and to whom he had promised much greater Things, and who had his Soul so filled with the utmost Acknowledgements for his Favours, that he would do his best to transmit to his latest Posterity, the Desire of making the same Returns he made of Service and Affection to his Almighty Benefactor; at the 17th and following Verses of this Chapter: *And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that Thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment,*

that

that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

IT is the latter of these Verses that I shall confine my self to consider on this Occasion, and shall offer what I have to say under the following Heads:

I. I shall consider the Duty of a Father of a Family, laid down in the Character GOD here gives of *Abraham*; *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord.*

II. THE happy Consequence of Parents rightly discharging this Duty, in the Behaviour of their Descendants, *They shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.*

III. THE Prosperity that may be hoped for upon Parents rightly discharging their Duty, and Children behaving themselves answerably, *That the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

AND I shall afterwards make some Application of what has been said, to the present Occasion of our meeting here.

AND I. Of the Duty of a Father of a Family, laid down in the Character GOD here gives of *Abraham*; *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord.*

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THE Reason here given by GOD of his using *Abraham* like a Friend, and communicating his Designs to him is, that *he knew he would command his Children and his Household after him, and they should keep the Way of the Lord.* In *Abraham* then we have the Character of such a Father of a Family as was acceptable to GOD, and consequently in his Example we have a Description of what is the Duty of every good Father of a Family. And here we may observe, that the Object of his pious Care was not only his Children, but his whole Household, *he will command his Children and his Household*; so that his Servants did not escape his kind Regard. And though in that Age, and in those Countries, Servants were generally Slaves, and thereby of greater Concern to their Masters, and more subject to their Commands than Servants are in this Age and Country; and as many of them were born in the Family, and so could have their most early Education directed by their Master's Will; the same Care cannot now be taken of the Piety of Servants as could then; yet certainly every good Master will endeavour, according to his Power, to promote Religion and Virtue among those employ'd in his Service.

Now *Abraham's* Practice towards his Family is here express'd by *commanding* them; a Thing, which, as it appears at first View, most Heads of Families are apt enough to do; but if we look farther in the Text, to see what was the Matter of his Commands to them, and consider duly what is meant by his thus commanding them, we shall find but few that discharge this Duty as they ought. The Thing he commanded his Children and his Household was as follows,

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lows, to keep the *Way of the Lord*, to do *Justice and Judgment*; or in other Words, as we shall shew under the next Head, to live in the Practice of true Religion. And his commanding them, implies his, every Way he could, instructing and influencing them so to do. The Duty then of Fathers of Families here laid down is, the promoting, by all possible Methods, true Piety and Virtue in their whole Household.

Now the first Step towards doing this is, fully instructing them in the great Truths of Religion, whether practical or speculative; the former, to furnish them with a Rule for their Actions; the latter, as the great Motives and Encouragements to observe that Rule. And this at first can take in only the more easie and general Doctrines and Precepts of our most holy Faith; but as the Capacities of Children advance with their Age, it should extend to a more distinct Account of what they are both to believe and to do; that so in Time they may know the whole Mystery of Godliness, and be fully instructed to every good Work.

ANOTHER Step towards working in them a settled Piety is, as they are capable of taking it, not only proving to them from Scripture the Certainty of the several Doctrines they are taught, but likewise convincing them of the Truth of that holy Religion there revealed, as confirmed by the many Miracles wrought by *Moses* and the Prophets, by *CHRIST* and his Apostles, to satisfy their Hearers that it was *GOD* who sent them to preach to Mankind the Doctrines there contain'd. And thus their Faith will not rest on the Authority of their Parents or Instructors, or on their Belief being profess'd by the Generality of
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their own Country, but on the solid Foundations of Scripture and Reason.

To this must be added, the inculcating into them the Weight and Consequence of what they are taught. That it is the sure and certain Way of Salvation, what their everlasting Happiness or Misery depends on; that by observing and practising the Precepts given them, they will be able to go through this troublesome World with as much Ease and Comfort as this State of Things admits of, and will in the next World arrive at an unspeakable and eternal Bliss; and that for despising or neglecting them, they will become the miserable Drudges of Sin and Satan in this Life, and will be for ever tormented in the Life to come.

AND it is for want of strongly impressing on young Minds the Importance of these Things, that too many, who have from their Childhood been instructed in the Scriptures, lead Lives so contrary to what is commanded in those lively Oracles of GOD.

By these several Methods, Parents lay the Foundations of Religion in the Minds of their Children. But they are farther to carry on the good Work, by every Way inclining and stirring them up to the Practice of Virtue. And this they may do, by directing them to perform particular Acts of Virtue, as Occasions offer; by warning them of, and fortifying them against Temptations to Sin; by advising them when they are at a Loss at any Time about their Duty; by earnest and repeated Exhortations to them to perform it; by reproofing them more gently or roughly, as their Carelessness or Refractoriness may deserve; by encouraging, and sometimes rewarding their doing well; and on the other side, where they find it

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requisite, by proper Punishment deterring them from what is evil. And by these various Methods prudently managed and intermixt one with another, they may hope to create in their Children an Abhorrence of Vice, and a Love and Habit of doing well; and will at the same Time dispose and instruct them in their Turn to take the same religious Care of their Children after them.

AND if we consider that Reverence Children almost naturally have for their Parents, and how much this is increased in well-nurtur'd Children, by a Sense of their Love and Care, and prudent managing of them, and what Weight this must give to every Intimation of the Will of their Parents, it will not seem any great Force upon the Word, to call the several Ways by which Parents inform or influence their Children to be virtuous, their *commanding* them to be so.

How much it is the Duty of Parents thus to command their Children to keep the Way of the LORD, as by thus instilling Piety into them, they very much advance GOD's Glory in the World, as they best secure the Temporal and Eternal Interest of their Off-spring, and as they furnish their Country with good and useful Members, I have not now Time to shew; but must hasten to the

II^d Head of this Discourse; where I am to consider the happy Consequence of Parents rightly discharging this Duty, in the Behaviour of their Descendants; *They shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.*

NOW by *keeping the Way of the Lord*, is to be understood the continuing in that Course GOD has commanded Mankind to proceed in, by believing and professing those Truths he has in his Word revealed to us, and by complying with those Precepts he has there given us. The making known to us this Way, was the Reason of his sending his Messengers the Prophets and Apostles to the World, from Time to Time. This is the Way, the constant walking in which, he has promised to reward with Eternal Life; and is no other than the believing and practising what is taught us and prescrib'd us in GOD's holy Religion declar'd to us in the Scriptures; and to prevent Mens wrongfully placing the Way of the LORD in any Set of Notions, without acting suitably, we have a true religious Department here describ'd, by *keeping the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment*; thereby intimating to us, that a Course of virtuous Actions is either the End of keeping the Way of the LORD, or the most effectual Method so to do.

NOW we are to understand what is here imply'd, that upon Parents commanding their Children, they shall keep the Way of the LORD, to hold generally, but not without any Exception. For it is certain, that some very good Men, who have done their utmost in rightly instructing and principling their Children, and have us'd all their Endeavours to set them in a Course of Piety, have, to their great Affliction, lost their Labour, and met with Returns of Undutifulness and Wickedness from them. But the contrary is more generally true; and where Parents have not been wanting in bestowing a religious Education on their Children, for the most Part such Children have

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continued in that good Way of the LORD, in which the Care of their Parents had set them.

AND it is reasonable it should happen so, both from the Nature of Things, and from the Blessing of GOD on such pious and conscientious Parents.

First, FROM the Nature of Things. The strong Impressions made on Children in their tender Years, of the Necessity and Advantages of a religious Life, and rivetted into their Minds with all the Authority attending the repeated Instructions, Counsels, Exhortations, and Reproofs of their Parents, will not easily be wore out. The good Habits contracted in their early Years, and confirm'd by long Use as they grow up, will make the Practice of Virtue easie and delightful to them, and will not, without much Struggle and Difficulty, give Way to the opposite Vices. The clear Knowledge they have of their Duty will not permit them to be misled into Sin, and will furnish loud Matter of Clamour and Reproach to their Conscience, if they knowingly allow themselves in any Transgression.

THEIR firm Belief of a GOD, and his Knowledge, and Justice, and Power, and of the terrible Sanctions of his Laws, will be constantly deterring them from violating his Commands; whilst the settled Sense and Persuasion they have of the immense Rewards of Heaven, will encourage them to Obedience to the divine Precepts; and both will support them against the Temptations they meet with to any kind of Wickedness.

NOR is it possible that when they have been long accusom'd to do Good, out of a Conviction of their Duty and Interest to do so, they should hastily quit the Paths of Righteousness.

SUCH good Parents and Children may likewise hope for the same happy Event from the Blessing of GOD on several Accounts.

THEIR Children are entitled to the more immediate Protection and Care of Heaven, as they are descended from godly Parents, and are a holy Seed; and by their being early engaged in a virtuous Life, they have strengthen'd their Claim to those gracious Assistances they might hope for on Account of the Piety of their Progenitors.

THEY have likewise farther Hopes that GOD will not suffer the Pains and Care bestowed on them by their Parents, in tincturing them with true Piety, and filling their Minds with the Knowledge and Fear of GOD, and training them up in Obedience to his Commands, to be lost, for want of seconding their good Intentions and Endeavours, with a proper Measure of his Grace.

AND if we likewise consider the many Prayers and Tears offer'd up to GOD by good Parents on Behalf of their Children, that he would write his Law in their Hearts, preserve them from all ghostly Danger, increase in them every Virtue here, and conduct them safely to Heaven hereafter; that these were the great Blessings desir'd to entail on them beyond any worldly Grandeur or Prosperity, and that for the Performance of this they trusted firmly in the divine Goodness; how can we think that GOD will deny his Servants this so reasonable and so pious a Request, which, next to their own Salvation, was uppermost in their Souls?

As this then is the Case of those, who, by the pious Care of their godly Parents, have been educated in the Knowledge and Practice of every good Work, there are just Grounds to expect that the Providence

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of GOD will more immediately watch over them, and his Grace be still ready in a more especial Manner to assist them in the Discharge of their Duty; by preserving them from too violent Temptations; by affording them Measures of his holy Spirit answerable to their Trials and Exigencies; by still strengthening their Faith, and warming their Love to GOD; by keeping up in their Minds a Sense of the Beauty of Holiness, and the Deformity of Sin; by clearing up their Duty to them in all Circumstances; and by constantly giving the great Motives of the Gospel their due Force on their Souls, so as to make them courageously persevere to their Lives End in that good Course they were by their Parents first engaged in.

AND when the Knowledge of their Duty, and the Necessity of performing it, with the good Habits they have early acquir'd, are thus aided and invigorated, by the powerful Suggestions of GOD's Spirit, they may be secure upon joyning their own Endeavours, of always *keeping the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.*

I come now to the *III^d* general Head, where we are to consider the Prosperity that may be hoped for, upon Parents rightly discharging their Duty, and Children behaving themselves answerably, *That the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

THE Things GOD had spoken of *Abraham*, here referr'd to, mean the Promises GOD had made him, that he should *become a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth be blessed in him*, in the Verse before the Text, and in other Places, *to make his*

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Seed as the Dust of the Earth, and as the Stars of Heaven for Number, and to give them the Land of Canaan for an everlasting Possession, and to be their G O D.

THE Promises indeed made to *Abraham* seem to be absolute, but however, part of them, we learn both by this Place, and by the Event, were only conditional. Since here G O D himself marks out plainly the Terms on which he intended to perform those Promises made relating to *Abraham's* Posterity, viz. their *keeping the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment*; so that upon their forsaking the Way of the LORD, it was not to be expected, that G O D would continue to *Abraham's* Seed the Promises made to him.

AND in Fact we find, that upon their not following the good Pattern of their Father *Abraham*, and keeping the Way the LORD had taught them by *Moses*, but falling off to Idolatry, and other crying Sins, G O D at first corrected them in the Land of Promise, by dreadful Invasions from their Neighbours, till he at length suffered ten of their Tribes to be carried off to a perpetual Captivity by the *Affyrians*, and the remaining Tribes to be led away Captives to the *Chaldeans*, and detain'd at *Babylon* for 70 Years; and when, after their Return, they fell again into great Impieties, and at length crucify'd and rejected the *Messias* sent to them, G O D brought on them the *Romans* to destroy them, and drive them out of their Land, from whence they have now been Exiles above 1600 Years.

AND if the particular Promises made to *Abraham* concerning his Seed, were to be understood with certain Limitations and Conditions, as we have seen they were;

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were; much more are all general Promises made to the Righteous, of *GOD being a GOD to them and their Seed*, of his *blessing them and their Seed*, of his *establishing a Covenant with them and their Seed*, and the like, to be understood with this Restriction, and on these Terms, that their Seed, after the Example of their Fathers, walk in the Way of the LORD, and observe his Statutes to do them.

IF then Parents are desirous to derive a Blessing on their Children, beside being righteous themselves, without which they can only entail a Curse on them, they must take Care to *bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the LORD*, that they may walk in his Ways, or the Wickedness of their Children will stop any Blessing, that might otherwise have descended on them, from them. And if Children hope for any Advantage from the Righteousness of their Parents, let them endeavour to tread in their Steps, and in Imitation of them, obey the Voice of the LORD, to keep his Commandments, or else their Expectations will prove vain, and be disappointed.

BUT where the Religious Care of Parents in the Education of their Children is answer'd by a suitable Piety in them, all that Prosperity may be hoped for justly by such Children, that is consistent with the advancing their Salvation and GOD's Glory.

How far they may depend on their Souls prospering, by being assisted and strengthen'd by GOD's Heavenly Grace, we have seen under the former Head.

BUT as to Temporal Concerns, they may be secure of being protected in Dangers, and having a Share of worldly Comforts, as far as the Tryal or Improve-

ment of their Virtue will admit of. They shall find inward Comfort and Support under those Afflictions, the Wisdom of GOD sees proper to suffer to overtake them. And they shall in the End be most certainly admitted to everlasting Ease and Happiness, laid up for them in Heaven.

I come now to make an Application of what has been said, to the present Occasion of our Meeting here.

WE have here before our Eyes, according to this Annual Solemnity, the general Assembly of the Charity-Schools in and about this great City. And to any one, who knows, that 'tis no long Course of Years, since this noble Design, of bestowing a Religious Education on the Children of the Poor, was first set on Foot, it cannot but be very pleasing to see to what great Numbers this charitable Care is now able to extend it self. And what will increase this Pleasure is, to reflect what must have been the Education of these poor Innocents, had they been left to the Management of their own Relations; that most of them would have been brought up in an Ignorance, little less than that of Nations, where CHRIST was never yet preach'd; without knowing the Nature of GOD, and their Obligations to him; without knowing that Life and Immortality brought to Light by the Gospel; without a Sense of their Duty, and any Hopes or Fears of a Reward or Punishment for performing or neglecting it. This must have been their Case, but for the pious Care now taken of them, by which they are taught *the Way of the LORD, to do Justice and Judgment*, are instructed in the Nature and Benefits of that Baptism, by which they were admitted into

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CHRIST'S Church, and the great Engagements they then enter'd into; and are taught what it is GOD requires of them here, and what an exceeding Weight of Glory he designs for them hereafter.

AND whereas they would otherwise have been a Burthen to themselves, and a Shame and Nuisance to their Country, through their Viciousness and want of Employment, they are now brought up in Virtue, and fitted for some honest Calling, by which they may be able to support themselves, be of Service to their Country, and have wherewith to relieve the Necessities of others.

WE have seen that every good Father of a Family will endeavour, after the Example of the holy *Abraham*, thus to train up their Children and Household in Piety. But these poor Innocents, for whose Benefit these Schools are design'd, must want this Care from their own Parents, whose Ignorance or Poverty, and constant Employment in getting their Bread by the Sweat of their Brows, disables them from instructing their Children themselves, and from paying others to instruct them. But what is deficient in them, is supply'd by the generous Care and Contributions of pious and tender-hearted Christians, who prove Fathers and Mothers to these, even during the Lives of their Parents, little better than Fatherless and Motherless Children; by setting them in a Way to live honestly and industriously in this World, and to arrive at an everlasting Life in the World to come. And it is through their Management, that they are at all fitted to be admitted into any Household, and bring with them, wherever they are taken as Servants, such a Knowledge of the Grounds of the Christian Religion,

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as may, with little Trouble and Inspection from their Masters and Mistresses, be kept up and highly improved.

WHOEVER has a due Concern for the Honour of GOD and our Blessed Saviour, for the Salvation of those Souls for whom CHRIST died, for the Reputation of our holy Religion, and for the Good of our Nation, cannot but wish, that the Advantage of this good Education, so happily set on Foot, may be continued and daily enlarged. And to such it must be a Matter of Grief, that the Zeal of many in this Affair is grown cool, and their Bowels straiten'd. I must therefore beg Leave on this Occasion most earnestly to entreat the several Managers and Trustees of these, and other the like Schools, that they would carefully prevent whatever may justly give Offence to, or be laid hold of as a Pretence, by any that are likely to contribute to this pious Design, to the End it may be carried on with the same Chearfulness and Unanimity that was for some Years remarkable. And this would in a great Measure be done, if they would see that the several Masters and Mistresses of these Schools instructed their Scholars truly in the Doctrines of our most excellent Church, without tincturing them at all with any Thing of those Party Quarrels and Distinctions that so unhappily abound amongst us; that they taught them good Will and Charity to all Men; and that they inculcated into them Loyalty and Subjection to the Temporal Governours plac'd over them by the Providence of GOD, as well as Reverence and Submission towards their Spiritual Rulers.

If this were done, the Mouths of Gainsayers would be stopt, and a Design, in it self so unquestionably pious and

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and useful, would probably be carried on with one Heart and one Mind, by all those who wish well to our Church and State.

AND if the good Success of these Societies in the virtuous Education of the Poor, should stir up the Emulation of the Rich, not to suffer their Children to fall short of the others, in a Sense and Knowledge of Religion, then might we be sure of a Check being put in the next Generation, to that Deluge of Profaneness and Wickedness with which the present Age is almost overwhelm'd; and then might we depend on GOD plentifully pouring out his Blessings on a People, so careful of continuing his true Worship and Service to Posterity. Then would our Government be settled on a lasting Foundation, our Nation prove truly great and powerful, abounding in Piety and Virtue, as well as Trade and Wealth; and then would our Church flourish, and become the great Glory, as it has been the Bulwark, of the Reformation.





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *SEPULCHRE*,

JUNE 6. 1723.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *DANIEL WATERLAND*, D. D.

Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

PROV. XXII. 6.

*Train up a Child in the Way he should go; and
when he is old, he will not depart from it.*



THE Meaning and Design of these Words
of King *Solomon* is plain and obvious at
first hearing: From whence we may reap
this Advantage, that the Time which upon
more difficult Texts would be spent in prefatory Ex-
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plications, may here be more agreeably (and perhaps more usefully too) laid out upon the Subject. The Pertinency of the Text to the present Occasion, will, I doubt not, be as clear and manifest as the Meaning and Purport of it: So that your Thoughts, very probably, will run quicker upon it, than any Words can do, and will be beforehand with me in the Application. My Design from it is to *offer*, or rather to *repeat*, some of the most obvious and most approved Rules and Directions for the Training up Children; and to intimate of how great Moment and Importance they are to the *Children* themselves, to their *Parents* and others having the Charge over them, and to the *Publick* at large.

YOU will not, I presume, expect any *new* Directions from me on this Head, (the *older* they are, the better) nor indeed any so exact and accurate as those which have been more maturely weigh'd, and after long Experience, perfected by the united Wisdom, and joint Counsels of those whom *GOD* hath raised up to inspect, promote, and conduct this weighty Affair through this great City, and other Parts of the Kingdom. All I shall endeavour, is to collect and lay before you a few useful Hints, out of many you will think on; such as may deserve to be treasured up in our Memories, and such as in regard either to their own Weight, or to our Forgetfulness, may very well bear the Repeating and frequent Inculcating. And now not to detain you with any farther Preface, I proceed directly to what I intend.

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First, To point out some of the principal Rules or Directions for the religious Training up of Children.

Secondly, To remind us of some special Reasons and Motives proper to inforce the Use and Exercise of them: Concluding all with a brief Application of the whole to as many as are any way capable of Promoting, Assisting, or Encouraging so good a Work.

I. I am, first, to point out some of the principal Rules or Directions for the religious Training up of Children. The Persons herein chiefly concerned are *Fathers* and *Mothers*, Natural and Spiritual, *Masters* and *Mistresses*, *Tutors*, *Guardians*, *Governours*, and the like. All the Branches of this Duty belong not equally to all: Many of them are indeed common to Parents, Masters, Guardians, &c. But some are special to *Parents* only, or to them chiefly, and not to the rest. In the Enumeration of Particulars, I shall think it sufficient if they belong to any; and if they be of such Importance as may make it necessary to mention, and not to omit them.

1. I shall begin with what comes first in Order, and which chiefly belongs to *Fathers* and *Mothers*, *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, the bringing Children to the Font, to be publickly baptized according to the Rules and Orders of the *Church of England*, formed exactly upon the *primitive* Model; saving only as to the allowing and dispensing with the *pouring* on of Water upon the Child, instead of *Immerſion*: Which Allowance has at length, by Custom, took Place of the Rule,
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and unhappily excluded it, perhaps beyond Recovery; tho' many good and pious Men have hinted their Desires, or Wishes, for restoring the primitive Practice, which had constantly obtained in *England*, from the first planting of Christianity, till within less than 200 Years ago, and has not been entirely laid aside, above a Century and a half at most. But enough of that.

I said *publicly* baptized. For as to the Custom of administering Baptism, by reading the Office for *publick Baptism* in private Houses, it is of very late Date, and is neither so decent, nor so regular as the publick Method which our Church prescribes in her *Rubricks*. It has indeed, with great Reluctance, been submitted to, and still is so; and especially in this *City* more than in any other Place of the Kingdom. *Custom* hath here also prevailed against *Rule*; and many have been, in a Manner, forced to comply with it, upon prudential Reasons; submitting to it as a tolerable Inconvenience, to prevent greater. But it were much to be wish'd that the more publick and solemn Way were again restored, and universally practis'd as formerly. To proceed.

WHEN *Baptism* is once over, nothing more remains to be done for the *Infant*, in the *religious* Way, for some Time; except it be *praying* for him. The Care of supporting and cherishing the growing Infants, while unable to speak, or to learn any Thing, falls not under the Head of *religious* Education: As neither does the Method of *Nursing*, or *Suckling* them; tho' it may not be improper to throw in a Word or two of it, because a *Case* of *Conscience* has been thought to be nearly concerned in it. Some *Divines* of great Note have been very particular and pressing upon the Duty of

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of *Mothers*, as obliged to nurse and suckle their own Children. I cannot stay to examine their Reasons for it, which are not all of the same Weight, but differing in the Degrees of more and less. One Thing, however, is certain, that it is no unalterable Duty of *Mothers* so to do: In some Circumstances they cannot, and in others they need not; there is a Latitude left for Discretion and Prudence in such Cases. They are in Duty bound to do the best they can for the Health of their Children, and the right forming their Tempers and Manners; both which may, in some Measure, depend on their first Milk, or on the Method of Nursing. But if both these Points may be effectually secured (as they often may) as well by a *Nurse*, as by the proper *Mother*, then the Thing is indifferent, and either Way may be taken without Scruple. But I pass on to something of much greater Moment, and of more necessary and standing Obligation.

2. As soon as Children are grown up to be capable of learning any Thing, it is the Business of those, under whose Care they are, to use all proper Precautions to prevent their learning any evil Customs, or bad Habits; and to season them betimes with a just and awful Sense of a God and a World to come. They have *Souls* to provide for as well as *Bodies*: And therefore due Care must be taken of the most precious Part which shall survive the other, and endure for ever. When Children arrive to little Notices of Things, (sooner or later, according to their different Capacities) Care must be taken to prevent their receiving, or retaining any ill Impressions. A Child of three or four Years Growth, tho' he will have but a very faint and imperfect Sense of what is good or evil, may yet con-

tract Habits of either. He may learn *Stubbornness* at that Age, which, if it grows up with him, will prove a very ill Quality: Or he may learn Submission, Modesty, and Obedience, which will, in Time, produce excellent Fruits in his after Life and Conversation. A Child will, at that Age, learn to *curse* or *swear*, if he becomes acquainted with such Language: Or he may be taught to abhor and detest every Thing of that Kind, and to form his Tongue to quite another Accent. Early Care must be taken in a Matter of so great Concernment.

TELLING of *Lies* is a Thing which Children will soon learn, and especially if they find Benefit in it, or can escape the Rod by it. This should be prevented with all possible Care, by possessing them very early with the greatest Abhorrence and Detestation of a *Lie*. And instead of letting them escape Punishment by any such little and mean Artifice, they should be detected in it, and immediately brought to Shame, and smart for it. *Sincerity* is the noblest and best of Qualities, and ought to be timely instilled and implanted in them. If that be wanting, there will scarce be any Thing truly good and valuable remaining. To be deceitful and disingenuous, is to be all that is bad: Above all Things therefore encourage and promote in Children an honest Heart, a plain and open Speech, a frank and ingenuous Demeanour.

It is hard to say, precisely, at what Age Children become capable of knowing what we mean by *Almighty GOD*, by *Heaven*, or by *Hell*. Some imperfect Notion of these Things may certainly be wrought into them very soon! And they will retain and improve their first Notices as they grow up. They may be

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be told that G O D will be *angry* with them when they do amiss; that he will torment them in *Hell-Fire*, where they shall feel excessive Pain, and be more sensible of Smart than they are now: And they may be informed, that G O D will be kind to them, and bless them, and give them all the good Things their Hearts can wish, provided they do well. Such Advices as these will at first appear new and strange to them, and will put them upon asking many little childish Questions about them; which should, however, be carefully and discreetly answer'd: And the Answers will be well remember'd by Children as they grow in Years, and may have a good Effect upon them all their Lives long.

It is observable, that many by the hearing of foolish Stories of *Apparitions*, while they were young, have received so deep and lasting Impressions, as not to be able, when grown up to be Men and Women, to correct this early Dread, or even to trust themselves *alone* in the *Dark*. This is but a silly and superstitious Fear, doing more Hurt than Good: And it would be a prudent and charitable Part in Parents or Governors, to prevent as much as possible the frightening of Children with any idle Tales of that Kind. But I would observe from it, how strongly those Fears work afterwards, which have been implanted in young and tender Minds. And therefore, instead of making Children afraid where no Fear is, let them be taught when, and whom to fear, namely, Almighty G O D. Let them be informed how dreadful his Vengeance is towards those that offend: How he drowned a whole World at once for sinning against him; how he rained

down Fire and Brimstone out of Heaven upon sinful *Sodom*; how he made the Earth open and swallow up *Corah*, and his Company, for resisting *GOD's High-Priest*, and for being stubborn and rebellious; how he ordered a Man to be stoned to Death for breaking the holy Sabbath; caused *Achan* to be as severely punished for *Stealing*; and struck *Gebazi* with Leprosy, and *Ananias* and *Sapphira* with present Death, for *Lying*. Let but Children have a List of these and the like Examples of divine Vengeance lodged in their Memories, by frequent inculcating, and by repeated Inquiries how they retain or resent them, and it will be to them a standing Lesson of Religious Awe and reverential Fear of Almighty *GOD*, that they shall not dare to offend him in any known Instance. Then, to give them a more present and constant Sense of what *Offences* are, and what the contrary, let them have Notice of them as often as they occur before their Eyes, in bad and in good Examples. If they happen, as they often will, to meet with any sad Examples of Drunkenness, Swearing, Cursing, and the like, let not such Examples pass without its just Censure and Condemnation, that Children may be thereby taught what to avoid. And when they see the contrary Examples of Piety, Modesty, Sobriety, and the like, let them hear these Things commended, that they may be thereby taught to go and do likewise. In such a Method as this may the Minds of Children be formed up to Virtue, and steeled against ill Impressions; which is the principal End and Aim of a religious Education.

3. To do this the more effectually, it will be necessary to maintain a just *Authority* over them, either correcting or encouraging them, as need may require.

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If they be first taught to submit to the Reason of their Governors while they are young, they will be the more easily and certainly conducted by their own Reason, when grown up to be Men and Women. They should be taught the Lesson of Submission betimes, before ever their Passions grow to a Head, and become unmanageable. It may be sometimes proper to cross and disappoint them: Never comply with a froward Temper, nor humour a Child even in Trifles, if he appears too stubborn and self-will'd. One that has been always indulg'd, tho' in slight Matters, during his Childhood, will expect the like Indulgence afterwards in Matters of much greater Consequence. Let them therefore be train'd up to Submission and Modesty; not to murmur or dispute, but to conform quietly and contentedly to Rules and Orders; to be patient under Discipline, and to take it as a Favour whenever their Desires are gratified, or their Inclinations indulged. By such a Conduct they will be made gentle and tractable, dutiful and well-disposed: And they will love their Parents or their Governors the better for it. It is a Mistake to imagine that excessive Fondness is the Way to oblige and gain them. It will rather produce Pride and Sturdiness for the present: Which will at length shew it self in ill Manners, Contempt, and Rudeness towards their best and kindest Friends. The Foundation of Love must be laid in Humility and Submission: Teach them first to stand in Awe by seasonable Correction; and it will be easie afterwards, a thousand Ways, to attract their Love and Esteem also. *He that spareth his Rod, hateth his Son, (says Solomon) But he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes,* Prov. xiii. 24. And

again, *Chasten thy Son while there is Hope, and let not thy Soul spare for his crying*, Prov. xix. 18. In another Place: *Foolishness is bound up in the Heart of a Child; but the Rod of Correction shall drive it far from him*, Prov. xxii. 15.

BUT while I am advising a just and seasonable Severity, I would not forget to throw in some proper Cautions, to prevent any Extreme on that Hand. As first, let it not be used but when *necessary*, or when *gentler Means* fail. If a soft Rebuke will be as effectual as a sharp Reproof, use it rather. The Tempers of Children are not all the same, but sometimes widely different; and so requiring a different Kind of Treatment. If any can be allured and inticed to their Duty, it is sufficient; and there will be no need of Threats, which, in such a Case, will do harm. However, do their Duty they must: And it does not become a Parent, or a Governor, to use much *Intreaty* where he ought to *command*.

ANOTHER Caution, in the Matter of Correction, is, that it be done, as much as possible, without Anger, Passion, or Resentment; tho' always with *Authority*. Passion is never a good Guide, and least of all in Matters which require cool and sober Thought. Besides, it sets an ill Example to a Child, and often tends to alienate his Love and Affections. And there is no Occasion at all for Anger or Resentment in the Affair of Correction. The only End it aims at, is the Good of the Child: And it should be consider'd only as a bitter Potion in the Hand of a kind Physician, who, tho' he gives his Patient some Uneasiness, is his Friend in doing so, and has no Resentment, or Anger against him.

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ANOTHER Caution in this Matter is, to proportion, as near as may be, the Penalty to the Offence: Not to be as severe for every childish Neglect as for Stubbornness and wilful Disobedience, for Swearing, or for Lying, or other Sins against G o d. Slight Indiscretions and Weaknesses, which have no ill Meaning, nor evil Tendency, may be slightly pass'd over: while Offences of a more heinous Nature are to be chastis'd with proportionable Severity. Having intimated what Course is proper in order to maintain a just Authority over Children, I now proceed to another Branch of a Parent's or a Governor's Duty; namely,

4. To bring them to *Church*, and to instruct them duly in their *Catechism* and their daily Prayers. The Design of bringing them so soon to Church, even before they can well understand what is doing there, is to inure them to the constant Practice of so necessary a Duty. If they know little for the present, as to what it means, they will, however, be sensible that it is their Duty to attend: And as they grow older, they will both understand what the Thing is, and reap the Benefit of it.

As to teaching them the *Church-Catechism*, it is a Duty so well known, and, I presume, so punctually observ'd, that it may suffice barely to have mentioned it. I suppose the same of bringing them to be *Confirmed*. They are to be taught likewise to say their daily Prayers, Morning and Evening. This is a Thing very necessary to be strictly insisted on. Children will soon be apt to grow weary of it: And if they be neglected, they will either not perform it at all, or quickly lay it aside. They must be told, that

it is not a Task, impos'd upon them meerly as Children, but what must carefully be observ'd and practis'd as long as they live. And this must be often inculcated, and earnestly press'd upon them: Otherwise they will be much tempted, in the following Stages of their Lives, thro' Cares, and Business, and sundry Distractions, to leave off the Practice, to the great Prejudice of their Virtue, and with the manifest Hazard of their Souls.

5. ANOTHER Duty of Parents and Governors, as such, is to *pray* and intercede with GOD for the Children under their Care. Means must be used, and prudent Methods carefully observed: But it is GOD alone that can warrant the Success of them. *Paul* has planted, and *Apollos* watered; but it is GOD that giveth the Increase. A *Father* may sow the Principles of Piety in his Children, and a *Mother* may improve and cherish them; a *Master* or a *Mistress* may add to Both, and a *Minister* may give a helping Hand to all: And yet without GOD's Grace and Blessing to improve and further it, it will come to nothing. It therefore highly concerns all that have the Charge of Children, to be often on their Knees, to implore GOD's Favour and Assistance upon their pious and painful Endeavours. And they need not doubt but if they do faithfully and truly perform their Parts, GOD will do his.

6. ONE Thing more I have reserv'd for the last Place, as being most considerable; Which is to set good Examples before Children, and to keep them as much as possible from the Sight of bad ones. It is indeed the bounden Duty of all Men to lead sober and

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exemplary Lives; but of those especially who are to go in and out before Children, and have the daily Charge of them. Children are very prone to imitate what they hear, and see. If you shew them nothing but what is good, they will assuredly take to nothing ill. A Child that never heard an *Oath*, will not invent one: And if he never sees an ill Thing done, it is more than probable he will never do one. It is bad Example commonly which first shews them the wrong Way, and a certain Depravity of Nature, prone to follow, confirms them in it after. And let this suffice just briefly to have intimated^{at} the Necessity and Usefulness of setting good Examples before Children, and of guarding them, as much as may be, from the Sight, or however from the Influence of bad ones.

I have now run through the principal Articles, such as have to me occur'd, relating to the good Education of Children. If the Rules I have laid down happen to fall short of what hath been already practised in many of our *Schools of Charity*, (which I am willing to hope hath often been the Case) then let what hath been said pass only for an imperfect Recital of what have been done in Times past, for the Instruction, Imitation, and Encouragement of Times to come. The very worthy *Trustees* of these Charities have thought it proper, upon the Election of a new *Master* or *Mistress*, to renew and reinforce these kind of Instructions in the strongest Manner: And they have had some Thoughts of erecting a *superior School*, for the training up of *School-masters* and *School-mistresses*, on purpose to carry on and more effectually to secure the

the same good End. All which shows their Judgment, of what Moment and Importance it is that the Office of training up Children be punctually executed: And it may well become our Place and Function, in our Discourses from the Pulpit, to endeavour to add some farther Strength and Encouragement to so good and great Designs. In order hereunto, I proceed now, *Secondly,*

II. To remind us of some special Reasons and Motives, proper to inforce the Duties laid down. And these are such as respect either the Children themselves, or those who have the Charge over them, or the Publick in general.

I. IN REGARD to the *Children*; the Text it self intimates a very important Reason, or Motive; namely, that if they be train'd up, while young, to what is good, they will not, when they come to be *old*, depart from it. Which is not to be so strictly understood as if the general Rule admitted of no Exception. There have been, and there will be again, Instances to the contrary: But such Instances, we hope, are, in Comparison, rare and uncommon. Those who have been well educated from the first, will, for the most part, hold on in the same pious Course. It seems to fare with our Minds as it does with our Bodies, to a great Degree of Resemblance. They are supple and pliable in their first and early Years, easily bowed and turned this Way or that: But they grow fixed and stiffened as they ripen in Age, then preserving the same Shape, Figure and Frame into which they had been first

first moulded. The very Disposition and Turn of the Mind depends much upon it: And perhaps a great deal of what we are used to call *Natural Temper*, is little more than that particular Frame of Heart which was first infused in our Education. It is a great Advantage to Religion, to have been timely planted in the tender Soil, and to have taken the first Possession: And Education, tho' not the only, is yet the principal Circumstance, and has the most considerable Share in our Tempers and Manners. Of the few good Men there are, most of them may, probably, upon Reflection find, that their pious Dispositions were at first owing, under God, to the prudent Care of some that had the Charge of their Infancy. Not but that Persons, however well trained up in Infancy, may afterward fall away in Time of Temptation: But they do not ordinarily do so; or if they do, their Consciences soon recoil, their good Principles formerly imbibed still remain; and they will at one Time or other exert themselves again with Force and Vigour. When once the Heat is over, and a little cool Reflection succeeds, such Persons generally will relent, and remember from whence they are fallen, will return and live: And it but rarely, perhaps, is found that they totally, and finally miscarry. From hence appears how invaluable a Blessing it is to have been set right at first. How easily, I had almost said insensibly, may such arrive to the greatest Heights. They run thro' the Difficulties of a religious Course without so much as feeling the Pain and Toil of it. Happy they that have been thus conducted

ducted through the Paths of Virtue, almost insensible of the Dangers every Way surrounding them; who have never known what it is to have been captive to Sin and Satan, never felt the Weight of prevailing Lusts, corrupt Customs, or vicious Habits. How easily may they obtain a *Crown*, which must cost others dear, and be but hardly at length gain'd (if gain'd at all) after many doubtful Struggles, many Sighs and Tears, many bitter Pains and Agonies of Mind. So much for the Advantage of good Education to the *Children* themselves.

2. I may next mention the Advantage accruing to *Parents*, or others who have the Care over them; in Respect of their Peace and Comfort in this Life, and their Rewards in a Life to come. As ever they hope to have any Joy or Consolation in the Children grown up, let them be careful to season them betimes with Principles of Piety. For, if they be not taught to fear *GOD*, they will not fear Man: If they have no Love or Reverence for their Creator, they will not love or reverence their other best Friends. Where there is little or no Sense of Religion, all other Bonds or Ties, such as nearness of Blood, or Kindnesses receiv'd, signify nothing. They will be sturdy and stubborn toward those who had the Rule over them, will despise their aged Parents, and pay no Reverence to their grey Hairs. And what can we expect better? Would we have *Wheat* spring up where nothing hath been sown but *Tares*? Or, should we look for any thriving Fruits from a neglected and barren Soil? No: according to what we
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low, that we may expect to reap: And if Children be rightly educated, then and then only may their Parents, Guardians, Governors, or other Friends, find Joy, and Comfort, and Satisfaction in them. But besides the present Comfort, there is a much greater in Reserve hereafter. The Children whom they have well instructed, and piously educated, shall as certainly accompany them to *Heaven*, as they now do to *Church*; and shall there, with united Melody, tune their *Hallelujahs*, here begun, to a more exalted Strain of Praises and Thanksgivings. There shall they return their joyous Thanks to their kind Preservers, for so happily conducting them to that blessed Place: Which will be so much the more welcome and delightful to *Both*, for the mutual Joy and Satisfaction they shall have in each other. It remains now only to consider,

3. THE Advantage hence arising to the *Publick* in general. If Children be well educated, it must of Course turn to the publick Peace and Prosperity of a Church or Kingdom. Every good Man so raised, becomes a Blessing to the Neighbourhood where he dwells; as on the other Hand, every bad Man is a common Pest and Nuisance. There cannot then be any surer Foundation laid, than what we are now mentioning, for the Security, Peace, and Welfare of any State or People. Which is the Reason why in *Rome*, and *Athens*, and *Sparta*, and other well order'd Governments, of old Time, a more especial Care was taken about the training up Youth. Without this, Men would grow wild and savage,
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and unfit for Society. Rebellions, Rapines, Murders, and other monstrous Impieties, are but the natural Fruits of depraved Nature, uncultivated by Education. But if Youth be wisely and justly managed, how happy will its Influence be upon Society, and what Blessings will it draw down from Heaven upon Men? This will be the surest Way to make our Church flourish and prosper. If the Youth be brought up to understand her Doctrines, and to practise her Rules, they will one Day be both Supports to it, and Ornaments of it. They will, we hope, from these good Beginnings proceed daily to make greater and greater Improvements: They will come better prepared to attend upon God's Ministers, and to receive fuller Instructions to compleat and perfect them in all virtuous and godly Living. Religion will hereby daily abound more and more, and gather new Life and Strength through the whole Kingdom. These are some of the Advantages proposed by our *Schools of Charity*, happily set on Foot, and wonderfully bless'd with Success through all Parts of our Island. The Application and Inference from all is, that we be every one of us willing and desirous to join our sincere Endeavours for the promoting so good a Work; contributing our *Quota* of Money at least, if not of our Service, according to our several Stations and Abilities, towards thus making the World wiser, and the Church larger; towards the improving of Mankind here, and the enlarging the Number of the Blessed hereafter.

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There is no need to multiply Perswasives in so plain a Case: The Thing speaks it self, and carries all the Force of the most moving Eloquence, or commanding Rhetorick, along with it. Who that hath any Bowels of Compassion for his Christian Brethren, any Love for his native Country, any Concern for our excellent Church, any Regard for God and Religion, or any Tenderness for the Souls of Men, can ever turn away his Face, or draw back his Hand from promoting and encouraging, to the utmost of his Power, so desirable, and so blessed a Work as we are now upon? A Work, which if it be as wisely and as carefully pursued, as it is piously intended and laid, will, I doubt not, go on prosperously while the Church stands, or the World lasts. If *proper Persons* be employed for inspecting and educating the poor Children, and a conscientious Care be all along taken in *collecting* and *disposing* the charitable Contributions in such a Manner as may best answer the Purposes intended: If the Provision thus raised, be ever prudently regulated and portion'd out, so as neither to *exceed*, nor *come short* of the first and main Design; *large enough* to invite the poor Parents to send their Children to these Schools; and *not too large*, so as either to puff the Children up, and set them above their proper Rank and Order, or to make them disdain any the *lowest* Kind of Work or Service, such as they are born to, and wherein they may be most useful: I say, if these, and the like prudent Regulations, (such as
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the worthy *Trustees*, the best Judges of them, shall find most expedient and practicable) be from Time to Time carefully observed, and constantly convey'd down, in Succession, to others; I will then venture to foretel, that there will never be wanting Hands sufficient to promote and carry on this great Design to distant Generations. All that are *well-disposed*, and understand their *true Happiness*, will be ambitious to bear a Part in this charitable Work of ours; wisely considering how much they shall thereby serve the Interests of the *Publick*, and their *own* also, both here and hereafter.





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of
St. *SEPULCHRE*,

MAY 28. 1724.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
THOMAS, Lord Bishop of *Sodor and Man*.

ACTS xiii. 48.

—*As many as were Ordain'd to [i. e. dispos'd
or prepar'd for] Eternal Life, Believ'd.*



THE *Charity-Schools* being design'd to give
the *Children of the Poor* not merely an
Orderly Education, tho' that it self is a
mighty Blessing both to them, and to the
Publick ; But more especially a *Christian Education*,
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whereby they may become Happy to all Eternity — I cannot think of a more proper Subject for this *Solemn Meeting*, than *This* I have made Choice of; — which intimates to us, — *That there are certain Dispositions necessary to qualifie Men for Receiving and Believing the Gospel to any saving Purposes.* —

— *As many as were ordain'd to, or prepar'd for, Eternal Life, Believ'd.*

HAVING made this out, we shall then proceed to enquire, —

First, What These Dispositions are.

Secondly, — What Manner of Education is most proper to imprint them in the Minds of those to whom the Gospel is propos'd.

In Order —

1. IN the *First Place*, — *To prevent them from making Shipwreck of the Faith which they have once receiv'd.*

2. AND *Secondly*, — *To oblige them to live according to the Precepts of the Gospel which they have embrac'd.*

BUT I must first observe to you, That *this Text* has been sometimes made Use of to favour an Opinion, which, if true, would render all Education, with Regard to another World, entirely useless.

THE Words *Ordain'd to Eternal Life*, having been understood to mean, that such as did not believe the Gospel to saving Purposes, it was not their own Fault; They were not *Ordain'd to it*, nor to that eternal Life to which a true Faith in JESUS

CHRIST

CHRIST entitles his Servants; — That they were never *effectually* called to believe the Gospel, and to obey its Laws; That Men are *born to unfortunate Ends*, and to the *Ways* that lead to them.

THIS has been an old Complaint and Refuge of Sinners. *The Foolishness of Man* (saith Solomon) *perverteth his Way, and his Heart fretteth against the LORD.* — As if GOD could take Pleasure in the Destruction or Misery of his Creatures. — An Opinion so absurd, that I should not spend one Moment of your Time in confuting it, but that it is absolutely necessary, that such as are *Candidates for Eternity*, of whom so great a Number are now present, as well as they that have the Care of their Education, should see the mischievous Consequence of falling into an *Error*, which would make GOD *the Author of Sin*; — *His Commands unjust*; — *The Holy Scriptures inconsistent with themselves*; — And render all the worthy Endeavours of *Parents, of Masters, and of the Societies* for Educating of Children, *useless, and even ridiculous*.

WE need go no further than two Verses back, to see this Error confuted by the Apostle himself; He there tells the *Jews*, That it was necessary, *i. e.* GOD had so appointed it, that the Gospel should first be preached to them; but that they, *by putting the Word of GOD from them, did, by that Act, render themselves unworthy of everlasting Life.*

IF to this we add, the Declarations which GOD himself has made, — *That he would have all Men to be sav'd, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*; — *That he desireth not the Death of a Sinner, but that he should turn from his Sin and be saved,*

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WE need go no further than two Verses back, to see this Error confuted by the Apostle himself; He there tells the *Jews*, That it was necessary, *i. e.* GOD had so appointed it, that the Gospel should first be preached to them; but that they, *by putting the Word of GOD from them, did*, by that Act, *render themselves unworthy of everlasting Life*.

IF to this we add, the Declarations which GOD himself has made, — *That he would have all Men to be sav'd, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*; — *That he desireth not the Death of a Sinner, but that he should turn from his Sin and be saved*,

— We shall see plainly, that it is in the Power of every Soul, by the Grace of GOD, to be happy; provided they put on firm Resolutions of working out their own Salvation with *Fear and Trembling*; i. e. with a Concern answerable to the Loss they will otherways sustain.

WE may indeed, as many of the *Jews* did, reject the Council of GOD for our Good, but then our Destruction will be from our selves, and not from any Decree of GOD's.

THE Truth is, the Word here translated *Ordain'd*, signifies no more than *Prepar'd* or *Dispos'd* for Eternal Life; and so 'tis translated in the Margin of our Bibles. That is, They that were well *Dispos'd*, They that *Fear'd* GOD, and were afraid for themselves, They that did not resist the Council and Grace of GOD; These, when the Gospel was preached to them, very readily embrac'd it: while they that lived at all Adventures, and feared no Evil, who hated Knowledge, and would not choose the Fear of the LORD, such as these *would not, could not* believe, and consequently, *could not* be sav'd.

THIS premis'd, We now come to consider the great Truth intimated in the Text:

I. *That there are certain Dispositions necessary to fit Men for Receiving the Gospel to any saving Purposes.*

THUS it was prophesied of the Messiah, before he appear'd in the Flesh, (*Isa. lxi. 1.*) and foretold who *would*, and who would not receive him.

The LORD hath anointed me to Preach good Tidings unto the Meek, for they would receive his
Message;

Message ; — *To bind up the broken hearted, for they would be glad of Help and Comfort ; — To proclaim Liberty to the Captives, for they, and they only who should be sensible of their Bondage, would be glad to be set at Liberty.*

ACCORDINGLY when our LORD *did* come, He invited such to be his Hearers, to whom he knew his Doctrine would be acceptable.

Come unto me all that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.

AND when he was reproach'd for conversing with Sinners, he only gave this Answer, *They that are whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick ; I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

— WHY, were not they all Sinners?

YES. — But that which is intimated in this Answer is this, That there are Sinners who are not at all sensible of their bad Condition ; and their Condition, for that very Reason, is the more deplorable, because they would not look out for Help ; while such as fear'd GOD, and were in Fear for themselves, were exceeding pleased to hear our LORD declare, — *That he came from GOD to seek and to save that which was lost,* (Luke xix. 10.)

These, and these only, heard him with Patience, — consider'd the Tendency of his Doctrine, — examin'd his Miracles without Prejudice, and were at last convinced, — That he was indeed a Teacher come from GOD ; — That he had the Words of Eternal Life ; That he made known Things of the greatest Concern to them ; they therefore embrac'd his Doctrine, and resolv'd to obey his Laws.

THE Apostles follow'd their Master in this exactly, and propos'd the Gospel to such as were prievously dispos'd to receive it. — *Whoever among you feareth GOD, to you is the Word of this Salvation sent*, Acts xiii. 26. And *such*, and *such* only, did receive it.

THE Centurion, amongst others, was an Instance of this, and of GOD's Purpose and Goodness to all such as improve that Light and Grace which he vouchsafes them. — He was a *devout Man, feared GOD, gave much Alms, and prayed to GOD continually*; and being thus prepar'd for greater Mercies, GOD, by a Providence extraordinary, brought him to the Knowledge of the Gospel.

ON the other Hand, we find too many of the *Jews* so prejudiced against CHRIST and his Doctrine, that nothing could convince them, no not Miracles themselves.

A remarkable Instance of this we have in the *ivth* Chapter of this Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

THE Apostles having cur'd a Man that was lame from his Mother's Womb; and this *only* by saying the Word, and it was done. A sure Proof that GOD was with them, because this was the very Way by which he had created the Heavens and the Earth.

THE Scribes and the Pharisees saw this — *We cannot, say they, deny it*: neither could they say that the Doctrine the Apostles Preach'd was unworthy of GOD. And what was the Consequence of this?

WHY indeed a very strange one. — *They order'd them not to speak any more in the Name of CHRIST*, (That very Name by which the Man had been made whole

whole) and threatned them severely if they should do so.

WHICH History will be an eternal Testimony against those who are ever calling for more Evidence, and making Objections against 'received Truths; when 'tis plainly their own *Obstinacy*, their *Prejudice*, or their *Wickedness*, which hinders them from perceiving the Truth; that Truth which is *worthy of all Men to be received*; the *Interest* of all Men to embrace it; and which having been so clearly reveal'd, and abundantly confirm'd, leaves all Men without Excuse, who shall reject it. For, after all, reject [it] Men will, if their Minds are not prepared to receive it.

If our Gospel, saith the Apostle, be bid, if it will not be received, it is bid to them that are lost — Whom the GOD of this World has blinded, 2 Cor. iv. 3.

So that it can never be an Objection against the Christian Religion, That all Men, so soon as the Gospel is preached to them, do not see the Truth, and close with its most gracious Offers of Pardon and Happiness; for if Men are not disposed to be serious; if they are engag'd in sinful Courses; if they shun that Light which would shew them to themselves; and despise those Means which God has ordained for their Conversion; 'tis no Wonder they do not, nay, it is impossible they should believe the Gospel.

AND this comes to pass, not by any *Fatal Decree of GOD*, but from an utter Indisposition to hearken to the Truth, and to see their Interest in it. And this also occasioned by a Custom of acting against Reason and Conscience; — by leading a Life con-

trary to Holiness; — By grieving the Holy Spirit of God, by which they had been sanctified; — and making it their Choice not to see the Consequence of a Life spent in Ignorance and Sin.

FOR this Reason it is that Children are the most proper Subjects of an Education which regards another Life; Before they have been suffer'd to grow wild; — Before their Souls shall have been polluted, their Senses depraved, their Minds and Memories corrupted by evil Principles and evil Examples; for when 'tis thus with them, we should find it the hardest Thing in the World to perswade them, even to hear what we have to say on the Part of Religion.

WHEREAS they that have the Happiness of being restrain'd betimes, and train'd up in the Fear of God, these will hear and receive with Meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save their Souls.

— AND it is for this Reason that *the great Enemy of Souls* has, of late, been most indefatigably industrious, and has set all his Agents at Work, to villifie and decry this Method of Instruction, and the *Charity-Schools*; Which are designed to give the Children of the Poor an early Knowledge of God and of their Duty, before Sin and Hell have got Dominion over them.

BUT this should not discourage those who are engag'd in this good Work; a Work, which if it had not been of God, it would have come to nought long e're this, considering the Malice of Satan, and the restless Endeavours of his Instruments, to bring an evil Report upon it; which, instead of making us uneasie, or *weary in well doing*, will only oblige us to consider with Attention, what *has*, or *can be*, objected

jected against these Schools of Piety; and to resolve to use our utmost Endeavours to make them effectually answer all the Ends of Charity proposed by those that *manage*, and by those that shall *contribute* towards supporting them.

Now, as we are *sincere Advocates* for this Charity, so must we be *faithful Monitors*, and always put you in Mind, that the *first and great Design* of these *Schools*, is to make Children *Christians in Deed*, as well as in *Name*; lest not *knowing*, or not *feeling* the Power of Religion in their Souls, they fall into the Vices of the Age, and become a Scandal to their Education, and a real Grief and Offence to all that have contributed towards carrying it on.

My Meaning is this: Children *may be*, and often *have been* taught the *general Truths and Duties* of *Christianity*, without any great Good following, for Want of such *previous Knowledge and Dispositions* as we have been speaking of, such as are necessary to fit them for *receiving the Truth in the Love of it*.

II. *What this Knowledge, and these Dispositions are, we now come to consider.*

§. 1. And First — As the Fear of GOD is the Beginning of Wisdom; so are the Fear of GOD, and the Knowledge of our selves, the Foundation of saving Faith in Jesus Christ.

To you that fear GOD (saith the Prophet) he will arise with Healing in his Wings, Mal. iv. 2.

He may indeed be seen by others, but he comes with Healing in his Wings to those only who fear GOD.

— JESUS

— *JESUS* cried — *If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Plainly intimating, That People must have a *Sense of their Wants*, They must have an *Appetite*, before they can so much as think of going to the *Living Waters* to quench their Thirst.

Thou sayest, saith the Spirit, (Rev. iii. 7.) *That I am rich; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

A sad Condition indeed; to be miserable without knowing it, and consequently without any *Inclination to look out for Help.*

BUT then, is not this the Case of the greatest Part of Mankind? And ought not the Cure of this Malady to begin here? Especially with Respect to those that are professedly taken in Hand to be delivered from this State of *Blindness and Misery.*

SHOULD not this be our First and Great Concern?

— To plant the Fear of GOD in their Heart betimes; —

— BY giving them a just and distinct Knowledge of GOD and his Attributes;

— BY making them sensible of the Relation they bear to him; and that they are accountable to his Justice for every Thing they do;

— BY explaining to them the Condition they are brought into, by the Fall of our First Parents;

— BY shewing them to themselves, and convincing them from their own Reason and Experience, *that Things are wretchedly amiss with them.* —

— THAT they are by Nature under the Power and Dominion of Sin; and that if they were left to them—

themselves, they would go on to obey it to their Eternal Ruin.

— THAT People need not be at Pains to make themselves miserable, for they'll be so of Course, if they make no Resistance.

IN short — By making them *see and feel* the *sad Estate* they are in *without the Blessing of a Redeemer*, we shall lay a good Foundation for saving Knowledge. But without *that*, the general Duties of the Christian Religion may be taught without Effect. And they that hear them, may live in a formal Profession of Christianity all their Days, and die in a Condition not better than that of Infidels.

Do but attend to what I am going to say, and you'll be convinced, That this is the *likeliest*, if not the *only Way*, both to *convert*, and to *confirm them* in the Ways of Religion and Virtue, *viz.*

— To open their Eyes, that they may see *with whom they have to do*; and that they may perceive how unworthy they are of the least of the Mercies GOD designs for them; and how liable they are to be for ever undone, if they are not careful for themselves.

FOR First — *This is the likeliest Way to convert them*;

— BY bringing them to a *Seriousness* of Temper, than which nothing is more necessary to a true Conversion.

— BY representing to their Minds *Things of the greatest Concern to them*. — *The Value of their Souls*, which they ought not to hazard, *tho' they were to get the whole World*. —

THE Happiness they are made for, and the Misery they *may* bring upon themselves, if they shall oppose GOD's gracious Design towards them.

THE Consideration of these Things, often set before them, will not suffer them to be indifferent; they'll learn to be afraid for themselves; and they'll consider with Attention, what is their true Interest, and *what they must do to be saved*. Fear being that *Passion which GOD makes Use of to make all his other Graces effectual*; —

Even Noah himself, *as great as his Faith was*, stood in need of *this Passion*, to make him do what GOD had commanded him, to save himself from perishing — *Mov'd with Fear*, saith the Apostle, *he prepar'd an Ark for the saving of his House*, Heb. xi. 7.

§. 2. — BESIDES, 'tis *this Disposition* which must make them fit Objects of GOD's Grace and Compassion — *To this Man will I look*, saith the LORD, *even to him that trembleth at my Word*, Isa. lxvi. 2.

§. 3. IF to this we add, That 'tis *this Grace*, and this only, that can make Repentance and a religious Life *less discouraging and burdensome*, than they are apt to appear to an unregenerate Mind, we shall still see more Reason to press it upon those whom we are about to instruct unto Eternal Life.

— *To deny themselves* a great many Things for which they are naturally very fond; — *To mortify their Lusts and Affections*, which are as dear to them as their Lives; — *To take up the Cross*, even before 'tis laid upon them. — These are Duties which corrupt Nature would avoid, if GOD, by putting his Fear into their Hearts, did not shew them

them the Danger, and the Necessity of doing any Thing to escape it.

AND here one cannot but wonder at those, who for the most part forgetting *this only sure Argument of Conversion*, do hope to perswade People to forsake their Sins, and lead a religious Life, by Arguements *purely Moral*, or on Account of *worldly Inconveniencies*. —

— YOU will ruin your Reputation, your Health, your Estate; you'll disoblige your Friends. —

— ON the other Hand, *Virtue is its own Reward*; How Honourable is it to be *just to one's Word*, and true in one's Dealings? — How *unworthy a rational Man* to live like a Beast?

— ONE may very well question, whether any Man ever since the Fall of *Adam*, was *converted* by Arguments of this Nature. Alas! our corrupt Hearts will easily get over every Thing that can be said which *only regards this World*. — But who can be so hardy as to slight *Eternal Ruin*? Or to despise *his Power*, and *his Displeasure*, who can destroy *both Body and Soul in Hell*? When represented in Terms *suited to the Capacities* of those to whom we speak, and press'd upon them with *becoming Seriousness*.

'TIS for this Reason, and because of our selves we have so little Inclination to *consider*, as well as little Power to *chuse* what is good, — That GOD in his holy Word, both in the Old and New Testament, has so frequently set before us the Terrors of the LORD, and of the World come; — That he has made known to us the certain miserable Portion of the Wicked in a future State; In order to awaken us.

— To

— To fill our Hearts with Fears of future Evils while we continue impenitent; — To make us *serious*; To make the Pleasures of the World *less palatable* — To break the Power of *Temptations*, or, in one Word — *To dispose us for Eternal Life.*

2. NEITHER is it of less Use *to confirm them in the Ways of Virtue and Piety.*

FOR it will represent to their Minds the *Dangers* they have escaped; the *sad Condition they had been in*, had not GOD vouchsafed them the Grace of Repentance; which will be a Means of curing them of that *Carelesness* and *Presumption* that are the Ruin of an infinite Number of Souls.

AND seeing the Circumstances of this Life, as well as the Commands of JESUS CHRIST, require that Christians should be always upon their Guard, nothing but a great Fear of miscarrying could reconcile them to a Duty so uneasy to Flesh and Blood.

BUT above all Things, this Fear will create in young People a *Tenderness of Conscience*, than which nothing will be of greater Use in the whole Course of their Lives, to preserve them from Falling.

TEMPTATIONS may be sudden, — They may not always have Time to consider the evil Tendency of Actions; — may not always know what their Duty requires of them; — But if their Conscience is *tender and awake*, they'll be sure to keep at the greatest Distance from every Thing they have Reason to fear may offend GOD; which will often serve instead of Time to consider; instead of Knowledge
to

to direct, instead of Friends to advise with in Time of Danger.

BESIDES these, there is one other good Effect *this Fear* will have upon those who are early possess'd of it. — And this is — *It will oblige them to live in a constant Dependance upon GOD.* — To be ever looking up to him for Pardon and Grace, for Light and Assistance, for Protection against their Adversaries, and against *that Security*, the Fruits of which are — *Negligence, a bold venturing upon Temptations, a wicked Life, and a reprobate Mind.*

I will only add — That this *Method of Education* appears to me to be — *The very shortest Way of giving Children a thorough Knowledge of their Duty both to GOD and Man.*

FOR besides this — *That it gives GOD the first Possession of their Hearts*, (which is sure no small Advantage) — It determines their Choice betimes; makes them afraid of the Dangers that surround them, and gives them an Abhorrence of those Vices which are so dangerous even to be acquainted with; and which one needs but once tast of, to become for ever Slaves to them.

BUT then, if we consider the Age, and the slow Capacities of those we have to deal with; — The many Precepts of the Gospel; — And the different Circumstances of Life, wherein they are to be apply'd; we should utterly despair of giving them a full Sight and Knowledge of their Duty, had not GOD directed us to *this short Method* — To teach them first of all *to fear him*; which will supply the Want of a great deal of Learning, — a good Memory, and a great deal of Time, which every Body cannot be Master of.

— So

— So that *Natural Conscience, the general Rules of Religion*, as they are summ'd up in our Catechism, and which every Body may learn; These, *assisted by the Fear of GOD*, will be sufficient to direct any Christian in any State of Life, in which the Providence of GOD shall place him.

— AND indeed, as it is but too sure that very many make a Shift with *good Parts*, and with a *great deal of Learning*, to be eternally ruin'd; so to the Praise of GOD be it said, we often see many poor People, with *very small Attainments*, but who have been bred up in the *Fear of GOD*, — *As true Lovers of GOD* — *As careful not to offend him*; — *As constant and devout in worshipping him*; *as just and conscientious in their Dealings with Men*, and *as sober and temperate in their Lives*; and consequently have as good a Title to the Blessings of Paradise, and the Kingdom of Heaven, as they that have had the greatest Advantages of Learning and Education.

IN short — *This Foundation being once well laid*, all other Christian Graces and Virtues will follow of Course.

WE shall *love GOD* proportionably to the Mercies we are sensible we have received from him, and the Dangers from which he has deliver'd us; we shall *hope* for all favourable Allowances from him, whom we know we fear and love;

— WE shall *honour him*, and every Thing that *relates to him*; and we shall serve him truly all our Days.

— AND being convinced that GOD has made the *Love of our Neighbour* a Proof of our Fear and Love of him, we shall always be afraid of doing any
of

of those Things to others which he hates and has forbidden.

Lastly, — Knowing that our Bodies are the Temples of the living GOD, we should endeavour to keep them holy and undefil'd, as the Temples of GOD should be; and shall always be afraid of profaning and polluting them, and of doing any of those vile Things which may drive the Spirit of GOD from his Temple, and leave it to be possessed by Devils.

— BUT I must not tire your Patience, and therefore I proceed in the last Place to consider,

III. *What manner of Education is most proper to imprint the Fear of GOD in the Hearts of those whom we undertake to instruct; In order, — To prevent them, if possible, from making Shipwreck of the Faith which they have once receiv'd; and to oblige them to live according to the Precepts of the Gospel which they have embraced.*

— THERE is indeed one Truth; which, if it would be believed, would make People more desirous to learn their Duty, than any Body could be to teach them — and that is —

That a virtuous Education is really preferable to all the Wealth and other Advantages of the World, without it.

BUT forasmuch as this will very hardly be received, we must take another Method, and endeavour to possess People's Hearts with the *Fear of GOD*, and a *Fear for themselves*, in order to prevail with them to lead a godly and a Christian Life.

WE must, for Instance, set before them the Power and Majesty of that GOD with whom they have to do; — That all his Laws are *holy, just, and good*; — That therefore he expects Obedience to them; — That he *sees* all their Actions, *hears* all their Words, and *knows* the very Thoughts of their Hearts: That tho' he is infinitely good and merciful, yet that he can be angry with Sinners, and severely too — As is plain from the many Judgments recorded in Scripture for our Example; and — That he will call all Men to an Account for the Talents he has given them. — That not only *wicked*, but *unprofitable* Servants, will then be punished. — *That therefore it is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the Living GOD.* — And that GOD has made these Truths known to them, on purpose that they may not ruin themselves eternally.

LET them therefore be taught to live *always* as in the Presence of GOD; as the most effectual Way to preserve in their Hearts a Sense of their Dependance upon him. — *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*; is a Rule given by GOD himself; — 'Tis a Rule that the most ignorant will be able to apply in all the Circumstances of Life — and the most learned cannot have a better.

— YOU are in the Presence of GOD — He is present therefore to *punish* you, if you break his Laws; — He is present to *reward* you, if you do your best to please him; — He is present to *assist* you, and when you want Help; — He is present to *defend* you against all your Adversaries. — *So that Life and Death are set before you.*

THEY are then to be made acquainted with their own Condition; what they are by Nature, what they *would*

would be if left entirely to themselves; — What they may hope for, by giving themselves up to GOD; — And what will certainly be the Consequence of their living without GOD in the World.

That they are by Nature born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath, is what they often hear, and often repeat; But then they should know — That to be born in Sin, is to come into the World a Creature, in whom GOD can take no Pleasure.

— A Creature, in which are the Seeds of all manner of Wickedness ready to spring up, and bring him to Destruction both of Soul and Body.

— A Creature, no more able to help himself out of this sad Estate, than a Man that is dead.

— AND that yet he must be deliver'd out of this Estate before he leaves this World, or he will remain under the Power of everlasting Death, of everlasting Misery.

FOR this they ought to know further, — That they are not only born in Sin, but by conversing with others as corrupt as themselves, they'll become still more wicked, the longer they live, and more offensive to GOD, if not restrain'd by his Grace.

— 'Twill be easie to convince them of this, by obliging them to consider those many People over whom Sin and Satan has got the Dominion.

— How they are Slaves to the most unreasonable Passions, — who having sold themselves to work Wickedness, they are at last come to that pass, *That they cannot cease from Sin.* So that neither the Fear of Temporal nor Eternal Punishments can restrain them.

THEN let them see the Folly of that most common Delusion — *That 'tis impossible they should ever fall*

into the abominable Sins they see, and every Day bear others guilty of. — A Delusion that has been the Ruin of infinite Souls.

— LET them know therefore that no Body ever was extreamly graceless and wicked at once; — That one Sin makes Way for, and brings on another; — That every one who lives in any known Sin, is advancing to a State of Atheism, *of wishing that there were no GOD*, and at last of living as if there were none. — That *they* are of the very same Race and Make with those very People whose Wickednesses they are *astonished at*; and that the same evil Spirit which tempted *them* to those Abominations, is *ever walking about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may be permitted to devour.*

Lastly, LET this Truth be often inculcated, That *we are not so much Masters of our selves as we are apt to imagine.*

GOVERNED we *must* be, either by the Spirit of GOD, or by an evil Spirit. — And that whenever Men grieve the Holy Spirit, and provoke him to withdraw his Protection, that Moment Satan takes them under his Power, and as the Scriptures speak— *Leads them captive at his Will.*

THESE Considerations, if any Thing, will make young People afraid for themselves, especially if they are often put in Mind, that a very few Years *will determine* their Fate for ever, and they'll be happy or miserable to all Eternity.

BUT will not this Way of dealing with Children *make them melancholy?*

By

— BY no Means. — It may make them *serious*, and *that* they ought to be, and they ought to be *so be-times*, lest they never be so as long as they live.

THAT which makes People melancholy is — when they have *wrong Apprehensions* of GOD; as if he had *Ordain'd them for Misery*; or when they are shewn the *Danger* they are in, without the *Way* to escape.

THIS indeed would be a ready Way to drive them to Despair.

— BUT when at the same Time that they see the *bad Estate they are in* by Nature, they are made to understand the *gracious Goodness* of GOD in the Manner of their Redemption — How he sent his only Son to take our Nature upon him, in order to deliver us from this State of Sin and Misery.

— THAT he is in *him reconciling the World unto himself*; — That for his Sake he will overlook the *Untowardness of our Nature*; — Restore us to his Favour; — Give us all the Aids necessary to do what he requires of us; and that if we continue to serve him faithfully all our Days, he will make us happy for ever; — There will *then* be no Reason for *Melancholy*, much less for *Despair*.

BUT on the contrary — They that are thus instructed, will easily perceive the *Reasonableness* and the *Necessity* of all the Duties which Christianity requires of them, and still readily close with them, whenever they are proposed to them.

THEY will see, for Instance, and be sensibly affected with the Love and Kindness of GOD in touching their Hearts with a Sense of the Danger they were in, which must needs be very great, *since none but the Son of GOD could deliver them*.

— **THEY** will highly value the Favour of their Deliverance, *as they will have Reason to do*; and this will very naturally lead them *to love the LORD their GOD with all their Heart*; and to do what they believe will please him, tho' it should thwart their own Inclinations.

— **WHEN** they shall be convinc'd, as they ought to be, that **GOD** requires Obedience to his Laws, for this Reason only, *that we may not be miserable, they'll avoid every Sin* he has forbidden, not because 'tis scandalous, or punishable by Man, but because it will displease **GOD**, and because it will utterly unfit them for Heaven and Happiness.

— **WHEN** once they have been made sensible, what little Power they had to deliver themselves out of that sad Estate in which Sin had involv'd them, they'll see it highly reasonable to give all the Glory of their Deliverance to **GOD**; and to cast themselves entirely upon him for Grace and Strength to carry them thro' all future Difficulties and Dangers.

— **AND** this will very naturally lead them *to pray to him continually*, to deliver them — from a corrupt World, infinite Errors, and most powerful Enemies, which they are sure to meet with in their Way to Heaven.

— **IF** they have been made truly sensible of the Corruption, the Weakness, and the Inconstancy of their Nature, and that Satan is ever ready to tempt them to their Ruin, they'll see, and they'll acknowledge the Reasonableness, and the absolute Necessity of Mortification and Self-denial, of watching and walking warily all their Days.

— **WHEN**

— WHENEVER they are in *Danger of back-sliding*, they'll be put in Mind of the sad Condition of that Man in the Gospel, whom our LORD has mention'd for our Warning, to whom an evil Spirit, after he had been turn'd out, return'd with seven other Spirits more wicked than himself; how *the last Estate of that Man was worse than the first*.

— AND having been often told, *as they should be*, that whenever the Spirit of GOD forsakes them, an evil Spirit will take the Government of them; and that every wilful Sin sets them further out of GOD's Favour, and gives the Devil still more Power over them — Whenever they shall have done amiss, they will immediately ask Pardon, that they may not put themselves out of GOD's Protection.

— IN one Word, they will not look upon Christianity *as a State of Idleness*, but consider it, *as indeed it is*, as a *State of Trial*, in which they are plac'd for a very short while, in order *to be restored to the Image of GOD, in which they were at first created*; and that if they lose this Opportunity, they are for ever undone.

— AND when they see so many about them *in the very Way of Perdition*, — They'll bless GOD for the happy Providence, and for all those whom he has made Instruments of their Conversion, — Before evil Habits were become a *second Nature*; — Before evil Conversation had corrupted their *Manners*, or evil Company their *Principles*.

§. 4. AND it is much to be wish'd, that they who stand charged with *the Education of those of better Circumstances* than those we are now concern'd for, would seriously consider, whether it is not for *Want of laying*

this Foundation; for want of possessing their Souls betimes *with the Fear of GOD*, and with a Concern for their everlasting Welfare, *that That Learning and other Accomplishments*, which are intended to qualify them for passing thro' the World with Reputation and Advantage, do only prove *a greater Snare to them*.

FOR 'tis too plain to be deny'd, that very many of those whom GOD has distinguished by *Honours, Liberal Educations, and great Estates*, are extreemly corrupted by *these Advantages*; — They are often *too Learned* to be instructed by their proper Teachers — *Too Great* to be reprov'd when they are in an Error; — *Too high* to submit to the Laws of the Gospel; — or too much taken up with the Affairs of *this World*, to be seriously concern'd for *that* which is to come.

— AND all this for Want of being *first instructed in the Fear of GOD*; and the Dangers they are exposed to if they should be so unhappy as to follow their own Inclinations.

— FOR Want of being *bumbled* with the Knowledge of the Majesty of GOD, *who putteth down one, and setteth up another*;

— FOR Want of knowing the Dangers and the Temptations of an high Estate;

— FOR Want of being convinced, that they are as much subject to the Laws of CHRIST, and as liable to be eternally ruin'd if they are not so, as the meanest on Earth;

— FOR Want of being often told — That the more they have, the more they are to answer for;

— AND lastly — For Want of being made sensible of the *vile Ingratitude* of living only to *dishonour* their great Benefactor.

WE are obliged to say it again, 'tis the Want of *this kind of Instruction* that is the *Source* of that Corruption which spreads it self so universally. — While a *superficial Knowledge* of the Christian Religion, of the Commands of GOD, and of the Way of worshipping him, is called a *Christian Education*.

AND therefore it much concerns all those, whose Hearts GOD has mov'd to set up *these Schools of Charity*, to see that the Children, in *them* at least, be taught in the first Place to *fear GOD*; to *know*, and to be *afraid* for themselves, and of *his Judgments* —

— AND then we might hope to see a Number of *young People*, *sober* and *serious* in their Behaviour — And when grown up, *peaceable* in their Lives; *upright* in their Dealings; *obedient* to their Governours; and *Examples of Piety* to all about them.

AND what Encouragement would all good Christians have to contribute, upon every Occasion, towards carrying on so excellent a Work?

— WITH what grateful Hearts would *poor Parents* embrace these Opportunities of having their Children taught, not only *how to live*, but *how to be for ever happy*?

— WHAT *thankful Returns* would many of *These* make, if ever GOD should enable them, in contributing towards the Christian Education of others?

— AND lastly — How much concern'd would our Governors be, to give all the Encouragement imaginable to these worthy Undertakings, and severely punish those who should endeavour to blast so good a Design.

FOR indeed, 'Tis *True Religion*, that must support the State; not only as it is a Means of averting GOD's
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Judgments, but as it is the *most effectual Means* of keeping Men within the Bounds of Duty and Obedience. *The Fear of GOD being the only sure Principle of Loyalty to be depended on.*

THE *Fear of Death* it self being but a *poor Restraint*, in Comparison of *the Dread of GOD's Displeasure*, when once the Heart is possess'd with a just Sense of it.

AND if ever we shall be so happy as to have the Generality of our Youth thus Educated, the *Civil Government* will soon find its Interest in it.

They that shall be taught to *fear GOD*, will as surely *Honour the King*, and them that are put in Authority under him.

MEN will obey them that have the Rule over them, not only *for Wrath*, for Fear of Temporal Punishment, but *for Conscience sake*, for Fear of offending GOD.

THE *Sacredness of Oaths* will be more regarded — And Christians will *study to be quiet, and to do their own Business*, and leave the Government of the World to those, on whom the Providence of GOD has laid that Burthen.

AND tho' the Corruption of Humane Nature will always make Laws, and Civil Penalties, and Magistrates to put them in Execution, and to decree Justice, necessary; yet this Burthen will become every Day lighter; —

WHEN the Number of untaught and undisciplin'd People shall be lessened — When Subjects shall become peaceable because of the Oath of GOD which is upon them — When Men shall make it their Choice to be Just to one another, *knowing the Ac-*

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count they must one Day give — And being convinced that this is not the World they were made for; when they shall be afraid of losing the Eternal Happiness of the *next*, by being too passionately fond of *this*.

IN short — There is no governing the *outward*, without first governing the *inward* Man; — Out of the Heart, saith our Saviour, proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Thefts, False Witness, Blasphemies, Matt. xv. 19.

— Now where the Fear of GOD is, there is no Room for any of these to enter; And this is the Reason that I have with so much Earnestness, and I am afraid Tedioufness, recommended a Method of Education, which, if religiously pursued, would in all Probability promote these great Ends — The Glory of GOD, — the Good of Mankind, — the Happiness of this Life, — and the Blessings of the World to come.





A

S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of

St. SEPULCHRE,

MAY 20. 1725.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By WILLIAM BERRIMAN, D.D.

Rector of St. Andrew's Undershaft.

PSAL. CXII. 9, 10.

*He hath dispersed, he hath given to the Poor,
his Righteousness endureth for ever; his
Horn shall be exalted with Honour.*

*The Wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he
shall gnash with his Teeth, and melt away;
the Desire of the Wicked shall perish.*



AMONG the various Methods of giving
Glory to GOD, it is none of the least
considerable, to celebrate the Acts and
the Reward of his Saints. Whilst he is
acknowledg'd for the Author of their Virtue and their
Happi-

Happiness, there will be no Danger of declining by this Means to Superstition and Idolatry; the *Creator's* Power and Goodness will be observ'd resplendent in his *Creatures*, but not the *Creature* worshipp'd instead of the *Creator*. So thought the holy Penman of this Psalm, who undertakes to set forth the *Praises of the LORD*, by declaring the *Blessings of the Man that delights in his Commandments*. In the Process of which Argument, the Words which I have just now read, do naturally suggest these three Points to our Observation, viz.

I. THE amiable Nature of a bounteous and beneficent Disposition: *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the Poor; his Righteousness endureth for ever.*

II. THE Happiness or Reward consequent upon it: *His Horn shall be exalted with Honour.* And,

III. A farther Illustration of this Matter, from a View of the Reverse, in the Character of the evil and worldly-minded Man: *The Wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his Teeth, and melt away; the Desire of the Wicked shall perish.*

To begin therefore with the

I. First, THE amiable Nature of a beneficent and bounteous Disposition is here considerable in these three Views, viz.

1. IN the general Notion and Exercise of this Virtue; *He hath given to the Poor.*

2. IN the great Extent of it, its diffusive Quality: *He hath dispersed,* or (in the old Translation) *He hath*

hath dispersed abroad, not confined himself to one or two such Acts of Charity, but repeated them with Frequency, and spread them with Discretion.

3. IN its Duration and Influence on future Times: *His Righteousness endureth for ever.*

1. *First* then we will consider the general Notion and Exercise of this Virtue: *He hath given to the Poor.*

As Mankind is manifestly form'd for Society, so 'twould be impossible for any of us to subsist in any comfortable Manner, without the Assistance and Help of one another. The Necessities of Life are so manifold and various, that they cannot be supplied all by the same Hand, or find sufficient Relief in any one Condition of Life, without receiving from abroad. Yet such has been the Bounty of Divine Providence, that for the most Part we receive over and above in one Respect, as much as we fall short in another; that so by parting with that which is superfluous, we may be able to procure for our selves what is necessary or convenient. Thus, if one be possessed of a greater Share of Money or Goods, yet another may have greater Strength or Skill to labour, may be Master of more Activity of Body, or Sprightliness of Mind. Each contributes in his Turn to supply the others Defects, and receives from him in Exchange what may be proper to accommodate himself. And if there be some in such unhappy Circumstances, as to be altogether destitute of any Method to provide for themselves, yet the Generality of Men are so much happier, as either by the Patrimony of their Ancestors, or by the Acquisitions of their Industry, to enjoy more than is necessary to their own Subsistence, and

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out of that are able to supply this (otherwise) deplorable Deficiency.

FROM hence then it appears to be a Principle of Nature, that all who have Ability, whether of Purse, of Body, or of Mind, are bound to consider the Necessities of other People, and spare some decent Proportion of their own Superfluities, to supply them in such Manner as their respective Exigencies call for Help.

THE Voice of Nature, in this as well as other Matters, is confirm'd by the unerring Precepts of Reveal'd Religion, whereby not only they who are *rich* in Possessions, are strictly enjoin'd to be *rich* also in *good Works*; 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. but even they who earn their Living by hard Labour, are taught to make it one End of Industry in their Vocation, *how that so labouring they ought to support the Weak*, Acts xx. 35. or such as are not in Condition to support themselves, and not think it enough *to work with their Hands the Thing which is good*, unless they have this View in doing it, that they *may have to give to him that needeth*, Ephes. iv. 28. Nay, it carries the Obligation to this Duty so high, arising from the Nature of that Stewardship with which GOD has entrusted us, as even to term it by the Name of *Righteousness*, implying, that however Men may flatter themselves with an Opinion of their strict *Justice*, when they commit no open Outrages upon their Fellow-Creatures, yet it is really impossible to be *just* or *righteous*, unless they moreover do them such good Offices, and relieve their various Wants and Exigencies in such manner, as may answer the End for which GOD gave them Ability to do it.

THAT

THAT Word indeed is used, after the *Hebrew* Idiom, to denote all Virtue and Goodness in the general *, as being that Debt which we all owe to GOD, to whose Honour and Service all our Faculties and Powers will be but justly dedicated. But it is more strictly applicable to the Instance of Almsgiving or Liberality †, because that is more directly done in Execution of a Trust, and by disposing of the Goods which are committed to us, according to the Designation and Will of the Proprietor. And if the same Term of *Righteousness* be sometimes used to express the Divine Mercy and loving Kindness towards Men, which is most

* A Man of Virtue and general good Character is, in the Style of Scripture, ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος, Luke i. 6. and ii. 25. Acts x. 22. From whence the same Persons, who stand opposed, Mat. v. 25. under the Terms πονηροὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ, are presently after term'd ὀνόματι καὶ ἀγαθοὶ. This is plainly an imitation of the *Hebrews*, with whom אִישׁ עָרִיק Gen. vi. 9. is a Man of a good and upright Heart; from whence the צַדִּיקִים are frequently opposed to the רָשָׁעִים and הַטְּמֵאִים as in Psal. i. 5. The Use of the Substantive is the same. If ye suffer (says St. Peter) διὰ δικαιοσύνης for Righteousness Sake, happy are ye, 1 Pet. iii. 14. i. e. for the Sake of Virtue and Religion. And so in Prov. xi. 5. צִדְקַת הַבַּיִת shall direct his Way, but the Wicked shall fall by his own Wickedness. The LXX Version of these and other Passages in the Old Testament, will sufficiently account for the Continuance of the same Style by the Writers of the New.

† Accordingly it is the Character which the Psalmist gives of the Righteous צַדִּיק הַרְנוּ וְנָתַן Psal. xxxvii. 21. The Righteous sheweth Mercy and giveth. In which Passage, tho' some Jews (in Pirke Avoth. c. 5. §. 9. vid. & Maimon. & Bartenor. comment. ibid.) understand GOD to be meant under the Title of צַדִּיק or the Just one, yet the Context rather shews it to be the righteous Man.

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most free and unconstrain'd*; yet it is to be observed that the Word is so applied in reference only to those Promises, whereby GOD has been graciously pleased (if I may so speak) to oblige himself and convey to us a Sort of Right to what we could not otherwise have claim'd. And so much must be granted also among Men, that since GOD has not expressly named the Persons to whom we are to give, nor the exact Quantity or Sum which we are bound to disburse, there is much after all left to every one's Discretion, even in this Exercise of *Righteousness*; and therefore some Share of Commendation follows him who does it liberally and cheartfully, it is reckoned the Result of his own Bounty, it is acknowledg'd as his Gift. So says the Psalmist in the Text, *He hath given to the Poor*. Nay more, as the Practice of our Duty in this Instance, cannot but argue an inward Affection and Sympathy with our Brethren, from hence it comes to pass that this, which is really an Act of *Justice*, has yet the Credit to be deemed an Act of *Mercy* and *Compassion*. Accordingly the Prophet *Daniel* has made Use of both these Terms to express the very same Thing, when he advised King *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. iv. 27. to *break off his Sins by RIGHTEOUSNESS, and his Iniquities by shewing MERCY to the Poor*. The amiable Nature of which Virtue, consider'd thus

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* As Psal. xxiv. 5. *He shall receive the Blessing from the Lord, and RIGHTEOUSNESS from the God of his Salvation*. And Psal. ciii. 17. *The Mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his RIGHTEOUSNESS upon Childrens Children*. From hence some have objected against the Account here given of the ground of this peculiar Acceptation of the Word. (vid. *Drus. Preterit. l. 6. ad 1 Cor. ix.*) but I take the Objection to be fully obviated by what is offer'd above.

far in the general, may dispose us the more readily to view it in the

2. SECOND Place with Regard to its great Extent and diffusive Quality: *He bath dispersed*, says the Psalmist, or (in the old Translation) *He bath dispersed abroad*, not confined himself to one or two such Acts of Charity, but repeated them with Frequency, and spread them with Discretion.

As they who live on their Estates have a continual Income growing or arising from them, and they who live by Trade or Labour receive a continual Profit and Increase of Gain; so they who have neither of these Methods of subsisting; must have continual Wants to be supplied, and give them fresh Occasions for continuing their Assistance. And withal, it ought to be consider'd, that the Number of the Indigent is great, which should teach them so to husband and manage what they bestow in Charity, that they may make it as diffusive as is possible, and reach in some Degree or other, to relieve the Necessities of many that are in Want.

To this Purpose the *Dispersion*, or *scattering* mention'd in the Text, is compared by the Apostle (when he cites this Passage of the Psalmist) to the *sowing* of *Seed*, which is thrown out far and wide, and that not by any single Cast, but by continued Distributions, till the whole Compass of Ground be provided of a Stock of Seed, sufficient to produce a plenteous Harvest. From which Allusion, the Apostle takes Occasion to pray for such a plenteous Increase, from what his *Corinthians* had bestowed, to their own temporal Advantage, as might make them in Return still more and more fruitful in these Works of Charity, 2 Cor.

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ix. 10, 11. *Now be that miniftreth Seed to the Sower, both minifter Bread for your Food, and multiply your Seed fown, and encrease the Fruits of your Righteousnefs (or Alms), being enriched in every Thing to all Bountifulnefs.*

NOT that they ſhould ſcatter it at Random, and ſquander it without Diſcretion! This would be Profuſeneſs inſtead of Liberality; and by gratifying the vicious Idleneſs or Avarice of ſome, would ſoon exhaust that Stock which ought to be employed for relieving the Neceſſities of others. As the Husbandman takes Care that his Ground be firſt duly prepar'd for the Improvement of his Seed, and throws it not away on Rocks or uncultivated Deſerts; ſo the liberal Man ſhould be careful to beſtow his Bounty where it may turn to Uſe and Benefit, and ſpread abroad with greateſt Profit and Advantage to Mankind. Thus like *Seed fown*, it may ſpring up an Hundred Fold, and the Relief that is given immediately to one, may in its Conſequences reach to many more, if beſtow'd upon ſuch Perſons, or to ſuch Purpoſes, as may beſt juſtify the Diſcretion of the Giver, or perform'd in ſuch a Manner, as may render his Example amiable, and provoke many who behold, to imitate his good Works. Of which we may conceive the greater Hopes, when to the Lovelineſs of this Virtue in it ſelf, and its diffuſive Quality, we ſhall have added in the

3. THIRD and laſt Place, its Duration and Influence on future Times: *His Righteousnefs* (ſays the Pſalmiſt, i. e. as was ſhewn before, his Charity) *endureth for ever.*

THIS some * have understood of the Continuance of so bounteous a Disposition, to intimate that the Person here described, is one who is not *weary in well doing*, Gal. vi. 9. but goes on from one Instance of this Virtue to another, and is ever producing some new Fruit of Charity. No doubt its Obligation is in this Respect like that of every other Virtue, not to be practised only by Fits and Starts, but to be constant and habitual.

BUT as this Part of the Duty was hinted at before, so perhaps the Phrase might be aptly understood to refer, not so much to the Disposition it self, as to the Continuance of its Effect, and the Duration of the Benefit that is bestowed. We have seen how Discretion is required in the disposing of our Charity; and surely it is one considerable Instance of Discretion, that we dispose it to such Uses, as may render it a standing Benefit. To feed the hungry, is indeed an Act of Charity, enforced as well by the Dictates of Nature, as the Precepts of Religion: But if the Person whom we save from famishing, be one capable of doing Service to the World, in that Case we are publick Benefactors to Mankind, and future Ages may reap the Fruit of so well design'd a Liberality. The Aged and the Impotent, no question, ought to be relieved: But let no one envy us a greater Satisfaction in what we bestow upon the Young and Vigorous; not to nurture them in Idleness, but to instruct them in such useful Knowledge, and breed them to such honest Industry, that the growing Generation may

* Bishop Patrick in loc.

may be bound to praise our Zeal, and having our Example for carrying on the same Design, may hand it down to future Generations, till the whole *Earth be full of the Knowledge of the LORD, as the Waters cover the Sea*, Isa. xi. 9.

BUT perhaps this Phrase might be yet more properly interpreted, of that Fruit and Benefit which the charitable Man shall find redounding to himself. *His Righteousness endureth for ever**, i. e. it shall always be had in Remembrance before GOD (as is intimated of the Alms of *Cornelius*, Acts x. 4.) and receive such a Reward from him, as will demonstrate that his Substance has not been wasted or thrown away, but discreetly improved to his own greatest Advantage. This will be often seen in the Increase of temporal Blessings to him and his Posterity. *His Seed* (says the Psalmist a few Verses higher) *shall be mighty upon Earth, the Generation of the Upright shall be blessed. Wealth and Riches shall be in his House, and his Righteousness endureth for ever*, Psal. cxii. 2, 3. From hence the Apostle seems to have urged this Passage of the Psalmist, to convince his *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. ix. 8. that GOD was able to make all Grace, or charitable Benevolence, abound towards themselves, that they always having all Sufficiency might abound to every good Work: and accordingly subjoins his Prayer, that GOD would actually multiply their Seed sown, and encrease the Fruits of their Righteousness, ver. 10. And if this temporal Increase do not always follow, yet the Psalmist adds, that *unto the Upright*

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* Dr. Whitby in 2 Cor. ix. 9.

there ariseth Light in the Darknes, Psal. cxii. 4. such inward Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, as must more than counterbalance all the outward Evil of Adversity. This is greatly supported by the certain Prospect of more glorious Rewards hereafter, which shall never have an End *, when *the merciful Man* will appear to be most eminently *blessed in obtaining everlasting Mercy* for himself, *Matt. v. 7.* when they who have exercised themselves in Works of *Righteousness*, through the Course of this mortal Life, shall receive that *Crown of Righteousness* and Life immortal, *which the LORD, the righteous Judge*, has promised them, *2 Tim. iv. 8.* But this may be consider'd farther under the

II. *Second Head* proposed for our Discourse; namely, the Happiness or Reward, which is annexed to such Beneficence: *His Horn* (says the Psalmist) *shall be exalted with Honour.*

AN *Horn*, among the sacred Writers of the Old Testament, is an usual Emblem of Strength and Power; from whence sometimes it is transferr'd to denote some single illustrious and potent Person. Thus CHRIST himself is described under the Character of *the Horn of David*, Psal. cxxxii. 17 to which the Father of the *Baptist* undoubtedly refer'd, when he styled him *the Horn of Salvation in the House of David*, Luke i. 69. Agreeably to this, *to exalt the Horn*, must signifie the displaying or making Manifestation

* The Hebrew Phrase in the Text, is not לעלם *in seculum*, which is sometimes used of a limited Eternity, but לעד *in aeternum*, which seems more expressive of an endless Duration, and is the very same Phrase whereby the Duration of GOD's Righteousness is expressed in the foregoing Psalm at the 3^d Verse.
אָהוּ עֹפְרַח לְעַד

festation of such Power and Excellency; and that whether in the Way of Haughtiness and vain Ostentation, as when 'tis said to the Wicked, *Lift not up your Horn on high, and speak not with a stiff Neck*, Psal. lxxv. 5. or by receiving some open Acknowledgment and Testimony of it, as when it is said, *for thou art the Glory of their Strength, and in thy Favour our Horn shall be exalted*, Psal. lxxxix. 19. In which respect the State of the Wicked and the Righteous are fitly opposed to one another, the former to end in Disgrace and Diminution, but the latter to encrease in Glory and Honour. *All the Horns of the Wicked also will I cut off: but the Horns of the Righteous shall be exalted*, Psal. lxxv. 10. To which honourable Exaltation, the Phrase in the Text is very clearly determin'd: *His Horn shall be exalted with Honour*.

It is said of Godliness, or the Practice of Religion in general, that it *has the Promise of the Life that now is*, as well as of *that which is to come*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. But more particularly is that Part of Godliness, namely Bounty to the Poor, encouraged to trust in the Care and Goodness of Providence, even for temporal Prosperity. *There is that scattereth*, (says Solomon) *and yet encreaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty*, Prov. xi. 24. Accordingly we find St. James upbraiding the *rich Men* of his Time, that their *Gold and Silver* was *canker'd*, their *Riches* were *corrupted*, and their *Garments moth-eaten*, Jam. v. 2, 3. the *Treasure* they had *heaped* together consumed and moulder'd away insensibly, without doing them that Service which is commonly expected. And what could be the Ground of this? The Apostle tells you, they had fraudu-

lently *kept back the Hire of the Labourers*, ver. 4. whose *Cries* had *pierced* into Heaven, and brought down this heavy Vengeance on the Heads of their Oppressors. The Prophet *Zechary* has made the like Representation, that a *secret Curse* from GOD should *enter into the House of the Thief*, Zech. v. 3, 4. on him that deals unjustly by his Neighbour, to waste and destroy his Substance, in Spight of all his greedy Care to encrease it, and *consume* the very *Stones* and *Timber* of which his *House* is built.

THE Duty now of Almsgiving (as we have seen) is founded in the Rules of Justice, and the express Command of the Supream Lord and Proprietor of all Things, who has not made over his Right to us, but only entrusted us with our respective Stewardships, which we are bound to discharge conformably to his Directions. From hence it is easie to perceive, that they who give not in some just Proportion to that Ability which GOD has given them, detain what really is not their own, and in this Respect stand on the same Foot with them, who spoil their Neighbour by Treachery or Violence, or fraudulently *keep back the Hire of the Labourer*. The Portion of the Poor, which lies mix'd and undistinguish'd from their own, will be likely to draw down such a Curse upon their Wealth, that it shall moulder and consume away, either in their own, or in the next Generation, and leave them miserably poor and destitute, who were too greedily *hasting* to enrich themselves and their Posterity. The Extravagance of some, or the Negligence of others, the Treachery or Violence of wicked Men, or some unforeseen and unavoidable Misfortune, shall frequently spoil them of those Riches, which were
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heap'd up without Regard to that Mercy, which is indeed a necessary Part of Justice, and without which we can never be reckon'd faithful in our Stewardship.

ALL this Danger is lessen'd in great Measure and avoided by him, who being careful to bestow his Alms, in Obedience to the Laws of his Creator, may humbly hope for the special Protection of his good Providence, and such gracious Benediction, as will either encrease his Stores, or else make even a little to be more durable and satisfactory, than all the Plenty and Affluence of the wealthy Sinner, that, according to a pertinent Saying of the *Jews*, his *Alms* may be *the Salt of his Riches* *, as being that which both gives them a Relish, and keeps them from Corruption. That Peace and Quiet of Mind, with which he enjoys the Bounty of his heavenly Father, is of it self an ample Compensation for all his Disbursements of this Kind; especially if he has this Reflection to add, that he has made Choice of the discreetest and most prudent Method of disposing them. And this present Satisfaction is exceedingly encreased by the Prospect of a more glorious Recompence to come. We are taught in Scripture, that *Riches profiteth not in the Day of Wrath, but Righteousness delivereth from Death*, Prov. xi. 4. And is it not then the justest Ground of Consolation, to reflect that those Riches, which (if kept) must be so useless to our future Welfare, have been laid out in such a Manner as to secure it most effectually? The Doctrine of the New Testament agrees, in this Matter,

* מִלֵּה מִטְוֹן צִדְקָה * vid. *Buxtorf. Lexic. Talmud. in rad צִדְקָה* Col. 1890.

ter, with the Old: Our blessed Saviour represents it as the Test of that Reckoning he shall make with us at the last Day, whether we have duly ministred to the various Wants of his afflicted Members, *Matth. v. 35, &c.* which he will esteem as done unto himself. And therefore St. Paul has pertinently urged it as the Ground why rich Men should be *ready to distribute, and willing to communicate*, 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. that so they may lay up in Store for themselves a good Foundation (or Charter*) against the Time to come, that they may lay bold on eternal Life. Then shall their Horn truly be exalted with the highest Honour; they shall receive Honour from that Wealth and Plenty, which otherwise must needs have failed them, unable to procure them an Entrance into Heaven, or mitigate their Torments in Hell.

NOT that the bare Act of giving Alms can ever entitle us to such a Reward! But when it is given, as it is here consider'd, from a religious Principle, it will then be accompanied with other Christian Virtues, all springing from the same Root of Faith and Obedience,

* The Word *θεμέλιος* seems to be here used in an Acceptation peculiar and Hellenistical. The Hebrew Word, which signifies *Foundation*, is used sometimes in the Rabbinical Dialect. for *tabula contractus*, a Bill of Contract, Bond, or Obligation, Accordingly this *θεμέλιος* is said to have a Seal, as those Instruments used to have Seals appendant to them. And as the Seal of those Bonds had a Motto on both Sides, so it seems has the Seal of this *θεμέλιος* a twofold Motto, mentioned by the Apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 19. vid. Sam. Petit. var. Lett. cap. 10, 11. quoted by Mr. Mede in his Discourses, p. 82. vid. & Hammond de confirmat. in prefat. & in comment. ad loc.

dience, which is the very Condition of our laying hold on the Gospel Promises, and entring into endless Felicity. This is to *receive Honour from G O D*, John v. 44. that durable, substantial *Honour* which should chiefly be regarded.

AND yet besides all this, it rarely happens that Persons of this Character do fail of some Share of Honour and Applause even among Men. For tho' there may be some People malevolent enough, to make this the very Ground for the most virulent Persecutions of their Wit, or their Interest in the World; yet, Thanks be to G O D, Mankind is generally better natured; and it is one Method which Providence takes for the Reward of Virtue, to conciliate towards it the Respect and Esteem of Men. Surely then this Virtue, which of all others has the most tender Regards to the Welfare of Society, cannot look to be ill treated, but by those, who are themselves the Pest of Mankind, and Enemies of social Virtue! And what Strefs is to be laid upon the Opposition given by such Persons, we may the better judge, when under the

III. *Third* Head of Discourse, I shall have added a farther Illustration of this Matter, from the View of the Reverse in the Character of the evil and worldly-minded Man: *The Wicked* (says the Psalmist) *shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his Teeth, and melt away; the Desire of the Wicked shall perish.*

It is the Property of the Devil, not to mistake the Nature of Virtue, and esteem it criminal, but to hate it for this Reason because 'tis good, and therefore

fore most opposite to his Designs. *The Wicked**, as his proper Emissaries, resemble him in this, and grieve to have the Foulness of their Vices made but the more conspicuous, by being placed near the Light of virtuous Examples. This Dissatisfaction must encrease, when they see that Wealth and Honour, which had glutted their Hopes, all blasted and withered as in a Moment, or even transferr'd to those righteous Persons, whom they were used to treat with Scorn and Ridicule. And when thus their *Desire* shall perish and come to nought, whilst the *Desire* of those they hate shall prosper and flourish; then Envy will succeed in the Room of Contempt, and what remains for them else, but to *melt* and pine away with Grief and Anguish of Heart? Some trifling Pretences they may use with a View to lessen the growing Reputation of an active Virtue: But they are so plainly the Result of Spight and ill Nature, that they serve oftentimes to no more Purpose than the *gnasbing of their teeth*, only to express their own Discontent and Uneasiness, but without being able to molest or injure those they rage against. They may Giant-like attempt a Romantick War with Heaven; but all their Preparations for that Purpose must recoil with double Force upon themselves, and cover them with Shame and Confusion. They may endeavour to deface those Characters, which the Creator has imprinted, of the natural Difference of Good and Evil: They may represent Vice it self as serviceable

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* The Word רשע *The Wicked*, is used emphatically, by the Jews, to denote him who neither gives to the Poor himself, nor can endure to see other People give; whilst he who deserves but one Part of this Character, is only said to have עירעל כשל or אכזרי an evil Eye in regard of other Peoples Substances, or in regard of his own. Pirke Avoth. cap. 5. §. 13.

to Mankind, and conducing to the publick Benefit. They may from hence exclaim against the Preachers of Righteousness, as Persons who aim at the enslaving of Mankind to Virtue, and restraining the Freedom of their Appetites. Or they may, with open Face, unacquainted with Modesty, and which has lost its blushing Quality; they may make it the very Ground of their Invectives against the most beneficent and charitable Designs, that they tend to remove the Hardships of the Poor, and to instruct the Ignorant. But so long as Reason and good Sense continue, all this *gnasbing* of their *teeth*, all this spiteful barking against Virtue, will only serve to make it more illustrious, and thereby to encrease the impotent Rage and Madness of its Enemies.

AND if such be the Effect of their Malice in the present Life, that, instead of injuring those they rage against, it usually turns but to their own Vexation; how much more, when the Scene shall open in the Life to come, when they who have *honour'd GOD with their Substance*, Prov. iii. 9. shall receive from him more abundant *Honour*, 1 Sam. ii. 30. and they who have *despised* him shall be covered with Shame and Reproach. Their Rage will then be aggravated by Despair, and their Envy rise in Proportion to the Glory of the Righteous. They shall continue then to *gnash* their *teeth*, (the wretched Amusement of that cursed State!) as well in Grief and Anguish for their own Torments, as in Rage and Envy at that abundant *Honour* which is done the Saints. Like that *Old Serpent*, whose *Seed* they are, they may raise their Heads with spiteful hissings; but impotent shall be their Malice, being likewise made Subject to the Serpent's Curse, to crawl and
seed

feed on *Dust*, Gen. iii. 14. whilst the Objects of their Hate are exalted among the Stars of GOD, and placed far above out of their Reach. Their Rage therefore and Bitterness may encrease without End; but it will only serve for an Increase of Torment to themselves, so long as they can take no other but the miserable Revenge of *gnasbing* their *Teeth*, and biting their Chains, and roaring everlasting Blasphemies.

AFTER all this Enlargement on the Terms and Phrases of the Text, it will be no hard Matter to descend to a more special Application of it to the good and pious Occasion of our present Meeting. The training up of Youth in such Nurseries of Knowledge and Virtue, is no question in it self a good and useful Design. They who are placed in any easie Circumstance of Life, do plainly confess it to be so, when they take Care, as in a Matter of great Moment and Concern, that their own Children may not want the Advantage of such useful Education. And if some Parents are not in Condition to make the same Provision for their Children, or dying leave their Case yet more deplorable, there can be little doubt, but here is Room to exercise the Virtue of the Text.

HERE are such Objects proposed, as the Apostle once recommended to his *Ephesian* Elders, *Acts* xx. 35. They are the *weak*, or such who, tho' oppressed with Hardship and Necessity, are not in Condition by their own Labour to provide against it. Their tender Years are unexperienced in the Cares of Life, and utterly unqualified for the enduring of such Labour and Fatigue, as might be necessary to their own Support. (Besides that it would take up that Time, if they were able

able to endure it, which should rather be employ'd in the gaining of preparatory Knowledge and Instruction.) And they have this peculiar Advantage in their Poverty, that the most virulent Malice cannot possibly ascribe it to their Vices and Extravagance. They are as yet below that State of Life, in which they might be tempted to expensive Wickedness; and therefore whatever Necessities they labour under, they can never be imputed to their own Vice or Negligence, but either to the Vices of other People, or to the more immediate Hand of Providence. They are *worthy* therefore, as well in Consideration of their present Innocence, as in Prospect of their future Services: They are *worthy for whom we should do this*, Luke vii. 4. for whose Sake we should join in this charitable Undertaking, both as a Means of relieving their bodily Necessities, and of providing for the Safety of their Souls.

THE Ease which is given their Relations, by maintaining them in some, and by cloathing them in most, of these Schools, considerable tho' it be, and a beneficial Instance of Charity, is made yet more extensive, by enabling the Children to provide against future Poverty, that they may not only be no Burdens to the Publick themselves, but may even be helpful to their indigent Relations, who either have not had the same Advantages, or have outlived the Opportunity of using them.

AND if this Care to provide for their Bodies be a Matter of Charity, much more must it be so to supply them with spiritual Food, for the Sustainance and Refreshment of their Souls, inasmuch as the Soul is more to be valued than the Body, and an eternal Life of Joy

Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, preferable to this transitory one, full of Care and Trouble and Anxiety. Besides that here likewise the Discretion of this Charity appears, as well from the Fitness of the Object, as the great Extensiveness of the Benefaction. For tho' it be a Matter of Charity, to instruct the Aged in their Duty, to reclaim them from their Errors, and enlighten the Darknes of their Understandings: yet alas, the Success must be much more dubious, where the Will is grown stubborn, and Errors are inveterate; where 'tis hard to wear out old Impressions, and imprint new; than when the same Care is bestow'd on such young pliant Minds, which having no confirmed Prejudices to be conquer'd, nor settled Habits of Vice to be extirpated, may with much less Difficulty be so *train'd up in the Way they should go*, as that *when they are old*, they may *not depart from it*, Prov. xxii. 6. Their Precepts and Examples, when grown up, may be useful to instruct Posterity; and this Assistance they receive in Youth, will reasonably dispose them in their riper Age to be helpful in educating others, and so extend the Benefit to many Generations.

THUS your *Righteousness*, which is already *dispersed* and *spread abroad* (as this numerous Appearance of young Children thus carefully brought up, besides the Account of others in distant Places, may fully testify) will *endure for ever* in its Effect and Influence, by helping to improve the Principles and Manners of Mankind, 'till Time shall be no more. It will *endure for ever* in Remembrance before GOD; and as it rises from Obedience to his Will, so it shall not fail of a Reward from him, partly in the temporal Blessings of this present Life, but more especially in the eternal ones of that which is to come.

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WHAT Benefits may we not expect from such diffusive and extended Charity! What comfortable Period to the Cries of the Necessitous! What Safety and Quiet to the publick Weal! What Honour to the Religion we profess! What Improvement to Posterity! A Design so much for the Honour of God, and for the Advancement of Industry and true Piety, so little chargeable with any sinister Views, and so plainly beneficial in its Effects, both to private Persons, and to publick Societies, to the Church and to the State, to the present Generation and to future Ages; one would hardly believe such a Design as this should meet with any Enemies, who desire to be thought the Friends of Truth and Virtue.

AND indeed it ought to be judg'd no slight Advantage, that some of its Enemies have lately taken off the Mask, and convinced the World, that whatever other Pretences they had formerly used to traduce these pious Seminaries, yet their Intention at bottom was to undermine Religion and Goodness, and by a chimerical Project to advance the *publick Benefit* by the *Ignorance* and *Poverty*, nay, and by the *Vices* of the People. As for the former Objections of *Disloyalty* and *Popery*; till they had been thoroughly canvass'd and appear'd to be ill founded, (the Method of Education in these Schools being really most opposite to those Evils, and the greatest Care being used to prevent the least Colour of Suspicion; I say, till these Objections were canvass'd and removed) some Persons, who had no ill Will to Knowledge or Virtue, might perhaps be excus'd, if they entertained a less favourable Opinion of a Design which had been represented to them under so ill a Character. But now that Difficulty is so happily clear'd up, we hope the Cause of Vice and

498 *The Excellency and Reward, &c.*

Ignorance will never meet with such Encouragement, but that these Schools will continue to be supported and maintain'd for that very Reason, because they tend to beat it down, and to promote the opposite Interest of useful Knowledge and active Virtue. Their Enemies may grieve, and gnash their Teeth (like the Wicked in the Text) to see them prosper and flourish, and the Promoters of them held in Reputation. They may pine with Envy, and snarl out Bitter Invectives; but in this they will only prove their own Tormentors, since the Credit of the Design increases but the more, for meeting with Opposition from them, whose Commendation would be a Reproach, and their Friendship the most lasting Infamy.

I forbear to pursue the Application to the other Life, in Hopes they may not yet have finish'd beyond Recovery, but may at length be so ashamed of this unreasonable Opposition to Religion and Virtue, that in the Time to come, their Zeal to promote every Method, which is justly calculated to advance its Interest, may in some Measure compensate for their preposterous Zeal and Infatuation on the other Side; that instead of aiming to destroy, they may henceforth join with us in supporting these pious Nurseries of Youth, that so in the End they may with us receive this comfortable Approbation of our Judge and theirs; *Matth. xxv. 21, 23, 34. Well done, good and faithful Servants, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Beginning of the World.* This God grant of his infinite Mercies, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, &c.

But now that Difficulty is under to all a Character. But now that Difficulty is under to all a Character. But now that Difficulty is under to all a Character. But now that Difficulty is under to all a Character.



A

S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of

St. *S E P U L C H R E*,

JUNE 2. 1726.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By *THOMAS MANGER*, D.D.

Prebendary of *Durham*.

MAT. XI. Ver. 5.

And the Poor have the Gospel preached unto them.



HIS Day is this Scripture in some Sort fulfilled in your Ears. The numerous Appearance of Children here present, taught early to know the Mercies, and to sing the Praises of their Redeemer, is a sensible Proof that the Poor amongst us have the

Gospel preached unto them. That great Charity of imparting Religious Knowledge to the lower Part of Mankind, is propos'd by our LORD as one of the Evidences of his being the Messiah, and must therefore be one of the Marks of his faithful Followers. So great Increase therefore of this Charity, such as appears upon this Occasion, must be accounted, and in Truth is so, the Blessing of this Age, and the Glory of our Church.

THIS Annual Meeting is doubtless a pious and prudent Appointment, and promotes very much the Interest and Growth of Charity-Schools; since by shewing to Advantage the happy and visible Effects of such Schools in this Capital City, Life and Encouragement are given to the like pious Designs throughout the rest of the Kingdom. The great Numbers, and orderly Behaviour of so many Thousands, supported by the Bounty, and directed by the Wisdom of a few, are sufficient to encourage the Zeal of Friends, and to soften, if not remove, the Virulence of Enemies. For what Objections can there be either from covetous, or crafty, or malicious Views, that what you have now seen and heard doth not abundantly confute? What Heart can be so obdurate, as not to relent, do I say, not to rejoice, at seeing so many train'd up to the Means of living both here and hereafter, rescued from Ignorance and Beggary, from the Distresses of a necessitous Life, and the Dangers of a vicious one?

THE Passage from whence my Text is taken, contains the Answer of our LORD to St. John Baptist's Question, *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* He returns, *the Deaf hear, the Lamé walk,*

walk, the Lepers are cleansed, and the Poor have the Gospel preached unto them. So many Miracles were evident Proofs of his being the Messiah, because it was foretold that at his Coming, *Isa. xxxv. 5. the Eyes of the Blind should be open'd, and the Ears of the Deaf should be unstopped; the Lamè Man should leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing.* However, there seems to be some Weight laid upon the last. Our blessed LORD, who was the great Pattern of Charity, chose to attest his Mission rather by the Marks of Compassion than Power. The *Preaching the Gospel to the Poor*, was at that Time as extraordinary and uncommon, and as much the known Character of the Messiah, as the healing of Diseases, and the raising the Dead. The Scribes and Pharisees, who were the only Guides of Life, were worldly, mercenary, and ambitious, and bestow'd their whole Endeavours upon the Men of Wealth and Station. The Poor were no Part of their Province, nor any Subject of their Cares; *John vii. 49.* their Teachers suffer'd them to be ignorant of the Law, and yet accounted them accursed for being so; and as they had not Zeal enough to give them useful Instruction, so neither had they Charity enough to excuse the Want of it. But our blessed LORD being the universal Shepherd, excluded no Rank or Degree of Men from his heavenly teaching. His Conversation was generally with the Multitude, who were admitted to be the daily Witnesses of his Miracles, and the Hearers of his Doctrine; and when neither Scribes nor Pharisees believed on him, the *common People heard him gladly, Mark xii. 37.*

THE same Spirit that was to anoint the Messiah to preach the Gospel to the Poor, hath inspir'd some

Persons, wise and useful in their Generation, to do the like by these Children before you, and to cause them to be train'd up in those Paths of Truth, which probably they never might have found, and which now, by the Blessing of GOD, they may never depart. My Business therefore as a Preacher, is not so much to stir up your Zeal, which hath hitherto so much abounded to the Glory of GOD, and the Benefit of the Publick, as to beseech you to go on in the same good Work, and to be assured, that as you have already seen the happy Effects of this Charity in this World, so you will reap the Rewards of it in the next.

THE Words of the Text offer three Things to our Consideration.

First, THE Subject Matter of Instruction, which is the *Gospel*.

Secondly, THE Persons to whom that Instruction is to be imparted, which are the Poor.

Thirdly, THE great Charity of imparting to the Poor such Instruction.

First then, THE Subject Matter of Instruction, which is the *Gospel*.

THE Gospel, containing the Rules of Holiness, and the Means of Happiness, is of Concern and Importance to all Mankind. Other Sorts of Knowledge are an Ornament to Persons of Fortune and Station, but that more excellent Knowledge of *Christ Jesus* is useful and necessary to all. The Instructions of Philosophy were generally useless Speculations, and calculated neither for the Perfection of private Persons

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sons, nor the Happiness of Communities; but those of Christianity are fitted for general Use, and deserved, if any Thing could, so divine a Teacher as the Eternal Son of God. The Doctrine that is according to Godliness, is qualified to raise Men to all the Perfection that Nature can reach, or Thought can imagine. There is no Station or Circumstance of Life, that the Gospel doth not improve; and it may be made upon all Occasions *a Light to our Feet, and a Lanthorn to our Paths*. Superiors may find there the Lessons of Condescension, and Inferiors those of Submission; the Rich may be taught Moderation in Plenty, and the Poor Content in Poverty; Youth may there learn to check its Desires, and old Age to soften and qualifie its Fears; every Disease of the Mind may here meet with a Cure; and every Distress and Difficulty, with a Guide and Comforter; and if the Practice of Christian Holiness were as universal as its Profession, Civil Government would fare much the better in the Harmony and good Order of all Ranks of Men, nor would there *then* be any complaining in our Streets.

Cicero hath observ'd, that the short Laws of the Twelve Tables were more useful and instructive, than all the Volumes of Philosophy; but how far short are these, as to the Rules of Living, of our blessed LORD'S Sermon upon the Mount?

It seems necessary to instruct Men in the Duties of the Gospel, as well because they are against the Byass of natural Inclination, as beyond the Discoveries of Reason. There is too much Partiality on the Side of carnal Appetite, to suggest any such Rules of Purity and Perfection as Christianity teaches. Self-denial,

Forgiveness of Enemies, doing Good for Evil, are not the Doctrines of Nature, and requir'd no less Authority than that of a Redeemer from Heaven to reveal and recommend them. If Men were left to the single Strength of Reason, they would fall very short of the Duties prescrib'd by Revelation. Their Conceptions would lead them to such Moral Virtues, as have immediate Influence upon their own particular Preservation, and the external good Order of the Publick; but the Corruption, or at least the Partiality of their Affections, would suffer them to go no farther. Thus, human Reason would readily enough suggest Sobriety and Temperance, but upon moral Principles only could never teach us Mortification and Self-denial. Nature might be, and indeed is, a persuasive Advocate for strict Justice in our Dealings, but would never, by any Suggestions of its own, rise to that perfect Charity, by which, as Christians, we are to double the Joys, and divide the Sufferings of our Brethren; *to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to mourn with them that weep.* Self-Defence and Revenge are lawful upon natural Principles, and are therefore avow'd by the best of ancient Philosophers; but a suffering Redeemer, who bore the Contradiction of Sinners against himself, and when he was revil'd, reviled not again, could by such Example only engage us *to do good for evil, to bless them that curse, and pray for them that despitefully use us,* Mat. v. 44.

THE Morality of divine Revelation is in these and many other Particulars, more perfect than that of natural Light, and exceeds as much in the Measures of Obedience, as in the Prospect and Certainty of its Reward. They therefore who have the Care of in-

structing

structing Youth in the Gospel, should be careful to represent the several Rules of Duty prescribed by it in their full Extent, and should teach the *Truth as it is in Jesus*. They exceed their Commission, and betray their Trust, when they explain and limit the Christian's Duty either by common Practice, on the narrow Sentiments of mere Nature, and make the Roads to Life smoother and wider than the Lord and Giver of it hath appointed.

BUT farther, Instruction in the Gospel supposes a Knowledge of its Doctrines.

IT is not possible to perform what the Gospel requires, without knowing and believing what it hath reveal'd. There is a close Connexion between the Doctrines and Duties of Christianity, the Belief of the one being the best, perhaps the only Means of engaging Men to the Practice of the other. For which Reason Faith is made the *Condition of pleasing GOD*, Heb. xi. 6. and we are told by our LORD himself, *that he that believeth and is baptiz'd, shall be sav'd, and he that believeth not shall be condemned*, Mark xvi. 16. The Hope of a Christian is the Subject of his Thoughts, and the Guide and Principle of his Actions; if he is ty'd to stricter Rules of Obedience, he is encouraged to that Obedience by Rewards greater in their Value, and more certain in their Prospect. For *Patience in Well-doing*, he is assur'd of *Honour, Glory, and Immortality*, Rom. ii. 7. and if he *mortifie his Members upon Earth*, it is upon the Confidence of having them hereafter glorified in Heaven.

THE Christian Faith is most truly call'd by St. Paul, the *Doctrine that is according to Godliness*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. and the *Truth which is after Godliness*,
since

since every Article of it is practical and instructive. What we are told there of the Divine Being, the Redemption, the Resurrection of our mortal Bodies, hath a direct Tendency to raise our Hope, and enflame our Love. Not only our sure Prospect of Happiness, but the Means of it by a Redeemer, are qualified to guide and engage our warmest Affections. For what Heart can be so cold and obdurate, as not to be mov'd with the Consideration of the divine Mercies in *Christ Jesus*? Who that hath any Sense of Honour or Gratitude, will not be moved by the extensive Effusions of divine Goodness to Man, as also by the dear Methods of bestowing it? How sure must those good Things appear, which the Son of God thought fit to reveal; and how great too must those good Things be, which he only could purchase? What Testimonies of God's Love to Man, or what Motives for Man's Love to God, can be wanting under the Sense and Influence of so great Salvation? *He that spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all Things?* Rom. viii. 32. And, on the other Side, how must it put Sin out of Countenance, to reflect that by every Act of it we are lavishing away the Price of our Redemption; that by Disobedience, we are breaking the Commands, and trampling upon the Mercies of him *who dy'd for our Sakes*. Every Transgression of the Gospel's Precepts, when taken in this Light, must appear to be a Complication of Folly, Dishonour, and Ingratitude; and is both a Breach of Promise, and a Failure of Respect to the best of Friends.

1 ONE of the first Things to be instill'd into the tender Minds of Children is, that they have a Redeemer,

deemer, and that their Title and Claim to Happiness are in and through him. Their Instructors should be diligent in impressing upon them a Sense of that Righteousness that is of Faith, and persuade them that they are *sav'd not by Works of Righteousness, but by the Mercy of GOD through the washing of Regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5. More especially they should know, that Baptism is not, as it is too much taken for, a civil Ceremony, but a solemn Admission into a saving Covenant, and is the ordinary Gate and Admission to Life. As they were then admitted to be *Children of GOD, and Heirs of everlasting Life*; so they solemnly undertook to be *Christ's faithful Soldiers and Servants to their Life's End*. The Promise is mutual on GOD's Part and Man's; and as in Consideration of *Christ's* Merits we receive Pardon and Reconciliation, so we promise for our Part Obedience and Perseverance.

It would be easie to shew, by an Enumeration of Particulars, if this short Occasion would give Leave, that every Article of the Christian Faith hath its practical Use and Tendency, and is well qualify'd to encourage our Endeavours for Perfection. When we contend for the Faith, once deliver'd to the Saints, it is not for dark and abstracted Notions, but for a *whole-some Doctrine, for a Form of sound Words, for the Support of Goodness, and the Comfort of our Labours*. They who set up Morality in Opposition to Faith, have generally prov'd either cool Friends, or cover'd Enemies to true Religion; and it hath seldom happen'd, but that the setting up of one against the other, hath been prejudicial to both. The Performances of a Christian cannot be supported without a sound Belief; and tho' a Sense of natural Conscience may keep

keep Men orderly in their outward Behaviour, yet without Faith they will never attain to *Patience in Well-doing*, and to that *Holiness without which no Man shall see the LORD*. The Christian Faith, like a well compacted Building, is so fram'd together, that no Part of it can be mov'd or alter'd, without Destruction or Danger to the whole; and it hath been observ'd more than once, that a Deviation from the *Truth as it is in Jesus*, hath generally had a very fatal Influence upon Practice.

BUT farther: The Grounds and Motives for which the Gospel is receiv'd, are another Subject Matter of Instruction.

THE Gospel is the most excellent Rule of Faith and Manners, but it cannot be so to all useful Purposes, till it appears to be, upon fair Examination, and full Evidence, the Word of GOD. Our holy Religion will bear the strictest Enquiry, and abundantly reward the Pains of those who make that Enquiry fairly. It hath generally fair'd the worse for being the less known, and the Enemies to it have very often establish'd the Truth by attacking and reviling it.

THE true Christian should be able to *give a reasonable Account of the Hope that is in him*; he should fairly examine, and upon such Examination will have full Reason to be perswaded *that these Things are so*. Most shameful it is to be Christians, not so much by Choice and Conviction, as by Fashion and hereditary Prejudice; and to receive their holy Profession upon no better Reason than the blind Entail of their Family or Country. Truth can never have the Merit and Reward of Truth, when it is receiv'd upon no better Arguments, than such as would be service-
able

able to Error; and Men will not be much the better for it in their Lives, when they have not the Evidence and Conviction of it upon their Judgments.

I would therefore observe, that those who are entrusted with the Education of Youth, should be diligent in informing upon this Head. They should not content themselves with explaining only what the holy Scriptures have reveal'd, but withal lay before them that external Evidence, for which those Scriptures were at first receiv'd for the Word of GOD. They should set in a fair Light those Miracles, upon the Credit of which the Saviour in whom they believe was declar'd *the Son of GOD with Power*, Rom. i. 4. Whilst they teach *them the Truth as it is in Jesus*, they should not forget to inform them, by how low and unequal Instruments that Truth was convey'd; and that a few Persons of low Station, unprovided either by Art to perswade, or Power to command the World, should yet by their own single Preaching, reduce a great Part of it to the Yoke of a crucify'd Redeemer.

THESE external Evidences for our holy Religion, should therefore be laid before all those in whom we would desire to produce the *Power of Godliness* as well as the *Form*: This Sort of Knowledge well manag'd and improv'd, will enable the Believer to bring forth *more Fruit to Perfection*; and will likewise give a Lustre to our Faith, in convincing the Mistaken, or *checking the Gainsayers*: Such Instruction must doubtless have a good Effect both in publick and private Views, and the Want of it (for some I think there is) seems to be the only Omission in the Institution of these CHARITY-SCHOOLS.

BUT,

BUT, Secondly, from considering the Subject Matter of Instruction; let us proceed to the Persons to be instructed, and these are the Poor, who from our LORD's own Mouth had the Gospel preached unto them.

THE glad Tidings of Salvation are general, and communicated to all, no Order or Degree of Men being excluded from them. The Poor in this extensive Errand of Peace to Mankind, have an equal Share and Interest with the Rich; since it is the merciful Will of GOD that none should perish, but that ALL should come to Repentance, 2 Pet. iii. 9. The vulgar and unlearned are as capable of Christian Knowledge, as to all the practical Ends and Purposes of it, as the most knowing and learned. Our blessed LORD was pleas'd, in great Mercy and Condescension, to open his Gospel to such as these in the first Place, and instead of an earthly Treasure which they wanted, imparted to them the *hidden Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*. *I thank thee*, saith our blessed LORD, speaking to his Father, Mat. xi. 25. *Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and revealed them to Babes. Thou see your Calling, Brethren*, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 26. *that not many wise Men, not many mighty are call'd: But GOD hath chose the foolish Things of the World to confound the wise, and the Things that are despised, and that are not, to bring to nought the Things that are.*

THE Knowledge of Morality among the old Philosophers, was generally treated too much like an Art or Science to be of very extensive Influence, and was de-

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deliver'd in so dark Terms, as to be suited only to Men of Retirement and Speculation. Those of little Leisure and low Capacities (and such is the greater Part of Mankind) would be neither disposed nor able to profit from such Writings. By this Means the Instructions of Philosophy were restrain'd to a very few, and became of little or no Use in common Life. But by the great Mercy of the Christian Institution, the Poor are as well qualified to know the Gospel, both in its Doctrines and Motives, as any of higher Station. All of whatsoever Rank or Degree are equally concern'd, and equally able to receive the Christian Doctrine.

THE instructive and practical Part of our holy Faith, is as obvious and engaging to any plain honest Christian, as to those who are more knowing. There is no great Reach of Capacity, no Abstruseness of Reasoning, nor any great Attainments in Learning, necessary to convince Men of the Love of GOD in Christ Jesus. Negligence and Want of Attention, rather than any Deficiency of Capacity, hinders them from understanding and valuing that Mercy whereby GOD was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself, 2 Cor. v. 19. That Love of GOD which, as St. Paul tells us, *passeth all Knowledge*, is qualified to warm the most vulgar Breast. High and Low, Rich and Poor, may be taught equally to admire that wondrous Condescension, whereby the *Word was made Flesh*, John i. 14. but the one is as little able as the other to explain or comprehend this great *Mystery of Godliness*.

THIS therefore deserves to be consider'd, for the Comfort of those who are concern'd in these CHA-

RITY-SCHOOLS, that as narrow as this Education may appear, it is notwithstanding sufficient to make poor Children useful to the Publick, and *wise to Salvation*. The Capacity to read, and a competent Instruction in the Principles of the Church-Catechism, seem to answer the full Intent of these charitable Foundations; and if such Education were carry'd much farther, it might probably render poor Children less fit for that low and laborious Station of Life, in which Divine Providence hath plac'd them.

BUT the Poor have not only equal Capacity to receive the Gospel, but sometimes prove better dispos'd to it from their outward Circumstances. Their Poverty, by a good Application of it, may be a Step to their being rich in Faith; and their Want of Possessions in this World, may make them more inquisitive and industrious about those of another. They are not liable to those many Snares and Temptations which *choke the Word, and make it unfruitful*, and which the Deceitfulness of Riches is apt to bring upon the more wealthy. The common Pastimes and Pleasures of the Rich, imploy too much of the Heart, to leave any Room there for the Remembrance of Divine Things. Whereas the Employment of honest and hard Labour, to which the Poorer are oblig'd, do not, at least need not steal away the Mind. Their Application to a worldly Calling, is no Obstruction to that more *high and heavenly Calling with which they are called*; and while their Hands are busie upon the Subsistence of themselves and Families, their Hearts and Affections may be, all the Time, lifted up to GOD.

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THE *Third* and last Thing that remains now to be consider'd, is the great Charity of imparting to the Poor this Instruction.

WHILE you are imparting to the Poor the Instructions of the Gospel, you are giving them the Knowledge and Means of Eternal Happiness, and are doing the most useful Kindness that one Mortal can do for another. The greatest Compassion that can be shewn to our Neighbour, is that which is bestow'd upon his Soul; and they who are employ'd in dispensing such Compassion, are the true Disciples of that Lord, *who went about doing Good.*

How great and momentous is that Trust that is committed by Providence to each Man, for the Use and Benefit of his Fellow-Creatures. The Means of Relief and Instruction; the Whole of temporal and spiritual Blessings, is not immediately and miraculously pour'd down from Heaven, but handed by the seasonable and friendly Conveyance of one to another. The Divine Goodness is indeed the first Source, and Original Fountain of every good Thing in us, but the Almighty is pleas'd to employ human Capacities and Dispositions as the Channels of its Conveyance. Each one is intrusted more or less with the present and eternal Welfare of his Brethren, and by a faithful Discharge of that Trust, under GOD, may be a blessed Instrument of promoting both. The Want of Christian Knowledge in the Poor, is one great Trial of our Faithfulness; and there are few so utterly unprovided, who by their Diligence, their Counsels, or their Bounty, may not be the Means of dispensing it to them.

To cloath the Naked, and feed the Hungry, are Acts of great Charity; yet are not they so pleasing to the Almighty, nor so useful to Man in the Consequence, as the reclaiming a vicious Mind, or the improving an ignorant one. Doubtless they who are zealously and faithfully concern'd in so good a Work, whatever the present Success of it may be, (tho' hitherto Wisdom and Faithfulness have seem'd to go together in all the Parts of this Design) are procuring to themselves the Rewards of those who *have brought many to Righteousness*, Dan. xii. 3. and will therefore *shine for ever and ever*. If the giving of a Cup of cold Water will not lose its Reward, Mat. x. 24. how much less the bringing so many to *CHRIST*, the Fountain of living Water? If the Relief of temporal Necessities be so much done to *CHRIST*; how much more the Supply of spiritual, and dispensing to them that Bread of Life, and Food of Immortality, which he left to his Followers? Lastly, if the saving but one *Soul from Death, shall cover a Multitude of Sins*, Jam. v. 20. how much more the bringing so many Children, by an early Education, from *Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to GOD*?

CONSIDER that by this Sort of Charity you are not only strengthening the Interests of an earthly Kingdom, by adding to it so many more Persons useful in their Generation, but you are likewise enlarging the Kingdom of our LORD and Saviour. These Children, to whom you so prudently and faithfully dispense the Means of Subsistence, and the Knowledge of Salvation, will appear at the last Day as so many Vouchers of your Faithfulness, and will be then, as they are al-

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almost now already, your Crown and Hope of Re-joicing.

It cannot but be a great Pleasure and Comfort to you in this Capital City, to see your pious Example so readily and universally follow'd by the rest of the Kingdom; and that, tho' the oldest of these charitable Foundations is within the Memory of some here present, yet there is scarce a remote Corner of the Land but is adorn'd with some of them. The small Beginnings, and great Increase of such Schools, seem to represent the Completion of that Prophecy, whereby *a little one shall become a Thousand, and a small one a strong Nation*, Isa. lx. 22. Probably the surprizing Progress of this good Work hath contributed to hinder a sinful Nation from filling up *the Measure of its Iniquities*, and may have had as much Power to avert or retard the Divine Judgments, as the Sins of others to bring them down. Ever since this and other such charitable Designs took Place, and flourished amongst us, an uncommon and undisturb'd Prosperity, in the midst of impending Dangers, hath attended all our National Councils and Actions, and Victory or Peace hath hitherto follow'd every Contest. And to what Cause can this more justly be attributed, than that *he who rules in all the Kingdoms of the World*, is pleas'd with this *Work and Labour of Love*, Heb. vi. 10. and repays your Bounty of this and other Sorts, with *Peace within your Walls, and Plenteousness within your Palaces*.

ONE visible Effect of these CHARITY-SCHOOLS cannot well escape Observation, that since their Erection, there hath appear'd in the common People

a more serious Form of Religion, a more decent Behaviour at Divine Worship, a greater Regard to Sacred Persons and Things, and an uniform Zeal for the Welfare and Continuance of our excellent Church.

BUT it seems not so necessary for me to enlarge upon the Usefulness of this Charity to you Gentlemen Trustees, who by your Bounty and Care over the good Work, have already testified your Opinion of it: Your Diligence and Faithfulness do abundantly prevent our Pains; nor would I presume, because I think it not needful, either to stir up your Zeal, or to direct your Prudence. The visible Fruits and Effects of your Well-doing, will never, I trust, suffer you to be weary of it, but rather encourage you to go on in the same Steps; and, if possible, to abound still more in this Work and Labour of Love. Let not the Objections that have generally arose, either from the Quarter of Covetousness or Infidelity, from a Love of filthy Lucre, or a Hatred of the Faith, ever slacken your Hands; nor let the Opposition and Scoffs of Gainlayers rob you of that Reward which is promis'd to those faithful Stewards, who shall be found *providing for their Master's Household in due Season*, Luke xii. 42. Be assured, that you will neither want the Comfort of this good Work at present, nor the Recompence of it at the Resurrection of the Just; and that your *Bread* thus providently cast upon the *Waters*, will not be lost, but will be found after many Days, Eccles. xi. 1.

As to you Children, who are the Subject of this Day's Meeting, I must in few Words lay before you

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you the great Happiness you enjoy by this Charity, and the thankful Returns which you owe both to God and Man for it. You are by the Bounty and Care of charitable Persons provided for both in your temporal and spiritual Wants, and furnish'd with the Means of Subsistence, and the Knowledge of your Duty. Tho' the Giver of all good Things hath lent you but a small Proportion of worldly Goods, yet he gives you abundant Testimony of his Kindness, in providing you so many Guardians and Benefactors, who are the Representatives of his Care, and the Dispensers of his Blessings. Thus *when Father and Mother forsake you, the Lord taketh you up*, Psalm xxvii. 10. and tho' by their Mis-carriages or Misfortunes you are the Poor of this World, by this charitable Design you may be made *Rich in Faith*, and Heirs of God's Kingdom. You should not therefore let any one Day of your Lives pass by, without offering up to your heavenly Father a thankful Heart for this his inestimable Gift; nor should his Benefits in bringing you so early to the Knowledge of himself, ever be lost in Sloth or Forgetfulness. The best, the only Return you can make for the Charity of your Benefactors, is to answer and promote their Christian Design, by living up to that Education with which you are now bless'd. Those Paths in which you are train'd by their Care, are the only sure and safe Paths; and if you *leave them not when you are old*, they will lead you to Happiness. Consider seriously, that this early Instruction, which is now your Happiness, if it ever be abus'd in wicked Courses, will become your Danger,

will aggravate your Sins, and increase your Punishment. In short, your Case will be worse for this charitable Care, since he that *knew his Lord's Will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes, Luke xii. 47. for it were better for them, saith St. Peter, 2 Pet. ii. 21. not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they had known it, to turn from the holy Commandment deliver'd to them.*



12 JY 62



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of

St. SEPULCHRE,

MAY 25. 1727.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By JOSEPH WATSON, D.D.

Rector of St. Stephen Walbrook.

PROV. iii. 28.

Say not unto thy Neighbour, Go, and come again, and to Morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee.



All proverbial Sayings are the Effect of Observation and Experience, so this we may suppose hath its Rise from its being customary among Men, to delay and put off till another Time, those necessary Works of Charity,

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which they are ashamed absolutely to refuse, and to pretend at present a Want of Ability to do them, when in Truth they only want a Disposition.

THIS Custom *Solomon* here condemns, and judges it worthy of a particular Caution. He gives indeed no Reason for his Caution, probably because there was no need he should; for he that defers the doing of a good Work, which he is able to do, and at the same Time acknowledges it to be his Duty, the Case plainly supposed in the Text, condemns himself, and sees his Error, tho' he hath not the Grace to avoid it.

AND I call it an Error, not only as it is a Breach of Duty, but as it is contrary even to worldly Prudence and good Management, which yet is the only Apology a Man can make for such Conduct. For, commonly speaking, Works of Charity are done, not only most serviceably to them that need them, but likewise with the greatest Ease to them that do them, by taking the first Opportunity for them: If therefore they be such as must be done by us, it is not only sinful, but foolish and improvident for us to delay them, after it is in our Power to do them; for Delays, in such Cases, only increase that Difficulty, which we think already too much, and is the only Reason why we delay.

HE that says to the needy Man, Go, and come again to Morrow, may reasonably expect that he will want more Help to Morrow, than he does to Day. For it is of the Nature of Necessity to grow upon us, the longer we continue under it; wherefore if he thinks himself bound to relieve him at all, and really means to do it, the wisest Way, with Regard to himself, is to do it now: It is like the Work of Repentance, which grows

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customary among Men, and grows more necessary as Time goes on, and another Time, these necessary Works of Charity which

more difficult by being deferred, while we our selves become less disposed.

BUT the Wise Man, by giving us this Caution, not to defer the Relief which we are able to give, does implicitly exhort us, wherever we can, to prevent the Necessities of our Brethren; since the same Reason that obligeth us to the one, obligeth us to the other also; for, why are we to be quick and speedy in giving Relief; but that Men should suffer no more Misery than is out of our Power to help, and for that Reason none which we can possibly prevent.

THIS then is the View with which I have chosen this Text; from whence I deduce this general Proposition, which I intend to be the Subject of the following Discourse, *viz.* that *Preventive Charity is the best Method of doing Good*: Or, that it is better on all Accounts to provide, as far as we are able, against the Miseries of Mankind, than to be ever so well disposed to relieve them under them.

I shall easily illustrate the Truth of this Proposition, by considering it,

I. WITH Respect to the particular Persons to whom our Charity is thus exprest.

II^{dly}, WITH Respect to the publick State of Mankind.

III^{dly}, WITH Respect to the Benefactors themselves.

Lastly, I shall apply the whole to the pious Occasion of this our solemn Meeting.

AND First, I think the Proposition evidently true, if considered with Respect to their particular Benefit,
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to whom we so express our Charity; for let any one say, which he takes to be the more desirable State, to be prevented from falling into Adversity of any Kind, or to meet with the greatest Pity and Compassion, Help and Relief in it. You'll say, perhaps, we have the greater Sense of Happiness, when it succeeds any Kind of Misery, than we have of that which we never knew the Want of. Be it so, yet, who would chuse to purchase his Relish of Happiness at that Rate? Who would chuse a Fit of the Stone, Gout, or Colick, only for the Sake of being more sensible of the Benefit of Health, when those Paroxysms are over, than they commonly are, who have never endured such Pains.

BESIDES, there are some Kinds of Misery, which if suffer'd to come upon us, are capable of no Relief by any human Means; few under which may be so relieved, as not to be in one Respect or other the worse for them: None that we can be entirely releas'd from, and made whole again, without undergoing some Pain or Trouble in the mean Time.

EVERY one sees the Truth of these Observations, if apply'd to temporal Evil: For doth not every Day produce some calamitous Thing or other of this Kind, which, tho' it might have been prevented, yet cannot be redressed by us, how much soever it may grieve us?

AND as to such as we can and do redress, how seldom do we see the Person as happy as he was before the Misfortune besel him? Sicknefs often leaves us impaired in Respect of our former Strength both of Body and Mind, notwithstanding the Skill of the Physician, and the Tenderness of those about us: Poverty breaks and dejects our Spirits, how kind

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Friends soever we may meet with in that unacceptable State: Infamy and Disgrace have the same unhappy Effect upon us, how unjustly soever they may have fallen to our Lot, and rarely leave the Reputation as fair as they found it, even after our Innocence hath appeared.

BUT supposing we could by the Help of Friends, or otherwise, recover in these Cases so as not to be in any Degree the worse for what we have suffer'd in them, yet is that Suffering it self of no Account with us? Is it not worth considering, that Sicknefs is an unpleasant State while it lasts, notwithstanding that it may be followed with as good Health as we had before? that Poverty hath its Uneasinesses, and those great ones too, which no Body makes his Choice, how short a Time soever they may continue, and with how favourable a Turn soever they may be succeeded? that Infamy wounds the Mind of every ingenuous Man so long as it sticks upon him, tho' it should afterwards be wiped off ever so clean? Is it not worth considering, I say, that there is no Calamity out of which we may be perfectly restored, without suffering some Uneasiness first? And is not this enough to convince us, that it is more for the Benefit of any Persons, to whom we would become Benefactors, to prevent, as far as we are able, their falling into Misfortunes, than to be ever so ready to relieve them when they are actually in them?

BUT here I must confess I am aware of an Objection to this Doctrine, from what occurs in diverse Places of Scripture concerning the Use and Efficacy of Afflictions *David* says, before he was afflicted he went astray, but afterwards he learn'd to keep God's Word. And St.

Paul

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Paul tells the Corinthians, that the light Afflictions which Christians endure in this Life, (and he reckons the heaviest of them such in Comparifon of their Hopes) work for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

FROM hence, and fuch like Passages, it would appear, that we are acting not a charitable Part, but the contrary, while we are endeavouring to keep our Brethren out of Troubles and Afflictions.

BUT this Objection, I think, is fufficiently answer'd, by faying, that though Afflictions are capable of being turned to this good Ufe, and this will certainly be the Effect of them, when they happen to Persons endued with a true Sense of Religion, and a Faith in GOD's Promises not to be shaken; yet confidering that we cannot be always fure that this will be the Cafe, but from the corrupt State of humane Nature, and the many ftrong Temptations to Sin, which Adversity of every Kind never fails to bring along with it, have great Reason to fear the contrary, it will ftill be Charity to prevent Mens falling into Afflictions wherever we can.

AND I am confirm'd in this Notion the more, when I confider that Afflictions are not abfolutely neceffary to Vertue, any more than they are certain always to effect it. For it is plain from Experience, that Men may, by the Help of a good Education, and the Bleffing of GOD upon it, be vertuous, though they have never been in what we may ftremely call Affliction's School; and fince thefe Things are instrumental to our Vertue, only in the Way of Correction, is it not better for us to learn to be good, if we can, without being thus chaftised to it?

It is not therefore, as this Objection supposes, a depriving our Brethren of a Means, without which Religion is not to be acquired, to keep them out of Adversity, since that State neither necessarily makes Men good, nor is Vertue peculiar to it. On the contrary, we often see Men drawn into Sins, thro' the Temptations they meet with in that State, which in all Likelihood they would have escaped, had they been otherwise circumstanced : And many Persons finish their Days without any remarkable Blemish in their Lives, because the Things of this World have been favourably dispensed to them, who probably might not have gone off the Stage so well, had their Vertue been try'd by Crosses and Difficulties.

It is true, the Circumstances of a Man may be such, that it were more charitable to him to let him fall into Troubles, than to keep him out of them : Nay, and sometimes we cannot perform the Christian Part towards him, without being instrumental in bringing them upon him. As when nothing else will reclaim him from the Courses of a vicious Life, but smarting both under their natural and legal Consequences. But the Point we are at present considering, is not what is necessary to be done, in order to reclaim Men that are already vicious, but only which is the better Way to prevent their being so ; to provide, as far as we are able, that they shall not come into Adversity, or to take the best Care we can of them, when they are actually in it. And we take it, that, generally speaking, a Man's Vertue is more in Danger, when he is under the Difficulties of the World, than when his Circumstances are easie in that Respect.

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AND if it be thus evidently true, that it is better on all Accounts for the Persons we would befriend, to keep them from the Misfortunes of the World, than to relieve them ever so kindly under them, no Dispute I think will lie, whether this be so or not, with Respect to the Evil of Sin, *i. e.* whether it be better for Men, that we should prevent their running into Wickedness, or that we should use our utmost Endeavours to reclaim them when they are engaged in it. For although the Case of Sin differs from that of other Evils with Respect to the two first of our Observations; there being no Sins which may not, through the Grace of GOD, be repented of, and Repentance, when it is hearty and sincere, will, through the Merits of CHRIST, be effectually accepted to Salvation, as if we had never offended; yet the great Danger there is of sinning on, till GOD is provoked to withdraw his Grace, when once we are ensnared; the Aversion we naturally have to all Thoughts of Repentance; and the severe Conflicts which we must sustain, when we come to it, before it can have had its perfect Work, are just Reasons why a State of Innocence should ever be preferr'd to that of Repentance, notwithstanding all the Assistances good Men may be ready to give us in it; nay, notwithstanding all the Motives and Encouragements thereto, which GOD himself hath vouchsafed in the Gospel of his Son. And yet in saying this, I would not be thought in the least to detract from the Merit of their Labours among us, whom GOD hath inspired with Zeal, and fortify'd with Courage, publickly to undertake the suppressing of Vice; for it is every whit as necessary that Wickedness should be cured, if possible, where it already is,

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as that it should be prevented if possible, where it is not.

Udly, THE Truth of our Proposition will farther appear, if we consider it with Respect to the publick State of Mankind.

THE fewer unhappy People there are in any Country, the better doubtless is it for the rest of its Inhabitants: For though we should suppose our selves not to be so affected with one another's Sufferings, as good Christians and tender hearted People always will be; yet since we cannot possibly live without the Assistance of one another, the more this is wanted by any one Part of Mankind, the heavier must the Burthen be that lies upon the rest. It is therefore, putting Religion out of the Case, a Part of Civil Prudence, and good Politicks, to contrive all the Ways we can to prevent the Necessities and Distresses of our Neighbours in any Sort; since these Things must, by natural Consequence, prove a Tax upon the Common-wealth; some must of Necessity become less happy, in Proportion to the Degrees in which others are needy.

NOR do we contradict in the least, by what we here advance, that just Notion of the Usefulness and absolute Necessity of the Poor to the well-being of Mankind. We allow those Words of *Solomon, the Rich and Poor meet together, the Lord is the Maker of them all*, to be rightly interpreted, that it is the Will of GOD, and purposely ordered by his Providence, for many wise Ends, that there should be Men of low, as well as of high Estate in the World.

AND yet we say, that it is both our Interest and our Duty, nevertheless, to see that the
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Poor do not increase through our Neglect. For we need not fear but there will always be a sufficient Number of them, both for the Exercise of our Charity, and the Uses to which they may be serviceable in Civil Life ; after we have done all that in us lies, to prevent their increasing. And if this be not done, we may reasonably expect that they will increase, till instead of making a convenient Mixture, the End which Providence intends to serve by them, they become a great and insufferable Grievance.

SOME envious, ill-natured Persons, there may be, who take the Estimate of their own Happiness from the Wants of others, and relish their Enjoyments the better, because few partake of the like ; and these will never be perswaded, that it is wise and advantageous Counsel to provide against the Increase of indigent People. But then they must not pretend that they are influenced in this their way of thinking, by any Regards for the publick Good. For it is evidently the entire Want of such Regards, and a most criminal and scandalous Partiality to themselves, that beget such untoward Thoughts in them. And the same uncharitable Temper, which makes them averse to all Methods of preventing the Misery of others, is sure to restrain them from exercising that Compassion which is due to them in it.

IF we turn the Argument from worldly to spiritual Evil, it is still the stronger. Sin, when it becomes epidemical, is the most destructive Thing that can possibly happen to the publick Weal of any People, not only as it puts them from under the Protection of the Almighty, and provokes his immediate Vengeance ; but

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as it plagues and harasses them by its own baneful but natural Effects; there being no Evil of any Kind so grievous and terrible to the Apprehensions of Men, but it may justly be look'd for, when Sin gets a Head, and reigns uncontroll'd; for as many Reasons therefore as Men have to desire to live in Peace, Plenty, and Security here, and at last to change this transitory State for a glorious Immortality, they ought to labour with their utmost Care and Industry to check the Growth of Sin, to nip it, wherever they observe it, in the Bud, because that is easiest done, and there will then be no Damages to be repair'd; whereas if it be suffer'd to grow and spread, though ever so little, there will always be some Mischief, less or more, produced by it, which will not be so easily, nor perhaps so effectually remedied, as it might have been prevented.

THE Case of the Publick is in this Respect much the same with that of a private Person; and we know we all of us find it easier to avoid the Beginning of Sin, than to part with a Habit of it; and therefore, though I would by no Means be understood, as I said before, as if I had a Mind to discourage any proper Method of Reformation, that publick Wickedness may call for, but do heartily commend every prudent Attempt that Way; yet every Body I believe will agree with me, that a religious Education of Youth will, if not quite supersede the Necessity of that Work, (for that I fear will never be) yet do that, which is next to be wish'd for, I mean, very much lessen the Difficulty of it. He that puts himself under a good Regimen for the Preservation of his Health, will not so often need the Physician; and considering that his Help doth not always avail, for want perhaps of being apply'd in

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Time, before the Distemper had got too great a Head, or the Strength of the Patient was too far spent; and that when it doth avail, it is not without giving the Patient Reason to wish he had never wanted him: He that is wise will take Care that his Assistance be as little necessary to him as possible. The Allusion I think naturally explains it self in Favour of all such Methods as are proper to prevent Sin.

III^{dly}, It is better for the Benefactors themselves, as well as for the Publick, and those that need their Charity, to provide against the Miseries of their Brethren, than to help them when they are actually in them.

THIS might easily be proved to you, from the little Trouble and Expence, which is, commonly speaking, necessary to this Method of doing Good, in Comparison of what the other requires. How easily, for Instance, in both these Respects, is one of these poor Children put into a Way of maintaining himself honestly, and all that shall proceed from him, compared with the Trouble, Vexation, and Charge, the Neighbourhood, to which he may or shall belong, would probably have had with him and his, had he been neglected in his Education? Those Parishes therefore are very evidently favouring themselves in Respect of their very Rates and Burthens, where these Charity-Schools are erected and discreetly managed: and for that Reason, every Person of Ability therein should, even in Point of Prudence, and out of Regard to his Property, as willingly contribute his Part to the Encouragement of them, as he does to any legal and necessary Taxation.

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THIS Instance was the most pertinent at this Time of any I could bring, for the Confirmation of what we are asserting, though a Multitude of others are at Hand, were they necessary: But I forbear to urge this Argument farther, it being obvious enough to enforce it self with all considerate People.

I chuse rather to shew you how advantageous this previous Way of Beneficence is to those that practise it, from the Excellency of the Principles from whence it proceeds, and consequently from the distinguishing Rewards with which they may expect to be enriched for it from the Hand of God.

WHEN Men are disposed to do Good to their Brethren before their Wants do immediately call for it, when they industriously set themselves to contrive Schemes for the procuring of future Benefits to the World, and greater than it hath yet been acquainted with, forecasting not only how the Mischiefs of any Kind, which Men may possibly, or are likely to fall into, may be warded off, but how Foundations may be wisely laid for improving in all Respects that Happiness of which Man is capable; what else can this betoken, but *pure Religion, and undefiled*? What other Motives can such be supposed to have, but the sincere Love of God, and Mankind for his Sake? Had they any Thing else at Heart more than this, their Actions could not be reconciled even with the Rules of common Prudence, which always teaches us to adapt our Measures to the Ends we aim at; so that we must suppose them to be the weakest, not to confess them the best of Men.

It is true, Acts of Mercy to People already in Distress, may proceed from the same good Principle, and with-

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out doubt often do so, otherwise they would not be made so great Account of, as we are assured they will be at the last Day. But still there is a greater Possibility that there may be a Mixture of something that is not properly Religion (the natural Effects suppose of Complexion and Constitution) in Acts of this Nature, than can reasonably be supposed in the other.

IN them Vertue seems plainly to move by its own native Energy and Power, and to be alone both the End and Principle of Action, there being nothing of any other Nature at Hand, that can with any Probability be thought to prompt us to them. Whereas, when we see a Man actually in Misery, we relieve our selves at the same Time that we relieve him; which, though it does not despoil the Action of its Goodness, if it be not our only Motive, but we consider God's Command in the first Place; yet it certainly puts it, in his Esteem, below those good Deeds to which we have no natural Impulse, but are invited to them purely by the Love of Vertue, and the Obedience we owe to the Divine Laws: For as they that do Evil with prepenſe Malice, and without Provocation, are justly reckon'd the worst Offenders; so they that do Good, not casually, and as distressed Objects happen to come in their Way and extort it from them, but steadily, and out of a settled Principle of Piety and Beneficence, are for the same Reason to be esteemed the best Men. And as the Greatness of a Temptation does, commonly speaking, extenuate the Guilt of a Sin; so it lessens the Charity of our good Works, when we cannot find in our Hearts to do them, but only when there is the most pressing and immediate Occasions for them. If then they are to be blessed, as our Saviour tells us, who

feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked, and visit those that are Sick and in Prison, is it not rational to conclude, that they shall be so in a higher Degree, who, out of their abundant Love to Mankind, provide, as far as in them lies, that none shall come into these Misfortunes? For is it not a more commendable Instance of Charity to put a Person in a Way to cloath and feed himself, and to live without being in Danger of a Prison, than to minister to him under the Pressures of Hunger, Nakedness, and Confinement?

THESE, as we said before, are Acts which Persons, that have any the least Goodness in them, cannot well avoid doing for their own Sakes, as Occasions happen to present themselves; for we derive a Pain into our own Breasts from the Misery of others, when it strikes so strong, and immediately on our Senses, which the Relief we give them contributes to ease us of; whereas the other invites us only by the Love of God, and the Goodness of the Work it self. We have none of those natural Constraints upon us, which the present and immediate Sufferings of a Brother are apt to put us under.

FOR these and such like Reasons, which it would be tedious for me at this Time any longer to insist upon, I think we may fairly conclude, that they that do Good previously, and in order to keep Men out of Misery, have an Advantage in Respect of their future Expectations over them, who are content to express their Charity only to such as do immediately need it.

I am now to bespeak your Patience, while I apply what hath been said to the pious Occasion of this So-

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lemn Meeting. And I think I may venture to say, that as the Charity, which we are here assembled to countenance, encourage and promote, is of that happy Sort, we have been so earnestly recommending to you; so none of that Sort was ever calculated for more worthy Ends, or with a better Prospect of obtaining them.

We will suppose then, that the immediate Intention of it is, the Benefit of these poor Babes, which you have taken into your Care: And what properer Object of Charity is there than a little helpless Infant, destitute of Parents to educate him, or in the Hands of such as are not able rightly to do that necessary Office for him? who, besides the Claim that Nature gives him to Compassion, hath all the Charms of Innocence to plead in his Behalf: Supposing then, I say, the Good of these little ones to be the End that is immediately proposed by this Charity; see how beautiful the Fruits of it do already appear in them: See how decently they are cloathed, how clean, how chearful, how promising they look; observe with what Order and Propriety, with what Modesty and Decorum they behave in the House of God, and in the Presence of their Benefactors: How well acquainted they are with our excellent Method of Divine Worship; how ready in the Knowledge of the Scriptures, and of their Duty to God and Man, as it is there taught; and this even to the Edification, not to say the Shame, of many grown Persons: Hear also how joyfully they sing forth the Praises of the great Creator and Preserver of Men, as if they had already a perfect Sense upon their Minds how tenderly he hath by your Means express'd his fatherly Love and Care for them.

BUT

BUT these are only happy Tokens and Prefages of the Benefits you aim at in Behalf of these Children, though it were enough to captivate every devout Heart, and even to force him into the Design, to behold only so much of the Beauty of it, as this goodly Appearance exhibits to us; but who that calls himself a Christian can withstand it? if he carries his Thoughts from what he already sees, to the much greater Things that may be justly hoped for; from these pleasing Signs, to the pious and useful Ends that are intended to be accomplished, and may reasonably be expected from this Undertaking.

NOW it may reasonably be expected from it, that the greatest Part, if not all of the many Thousands that are thus taken Care of, and who, through the Disadvantages under which they came into the World would probably have been exposed to all manner of Evil, both bodily and spiritual, will be in a Condition, not only to live comfortably here, but to secure to themselves a much better Inheritance in the World to come. That many that would have known little else in Life but the Miseries of Poverty, will by these Means enjoy all the good Things that are fitting and convenient for them; and be able perhaps out of their Abundance, to minister to the Wants of others. That many, who would have consumed their Days idly and unprofitably, and ended them, it may be, with untimely and infamous Deaths, will, thro' their Industry in some useful Station or other, be able to give a good Account of their Time, and leave Monuments behind them to their everlasting Honour. That many again, who would have lived in the grossest Ignorance of all spiritual Things, and consequently without all

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Thought and Care for their Future State, will become wise and eminent Christians, shining as Lights in a sinful World, and helping much to reform that Wickedness in which it lies.

AND now that we are reciting the several Advantages which these Children will probably reap from your Charity, let it not be forgotten, that by it they will be enabled the better to discharge their Duty to their poor Parents and Relations, not only by administering to the Necessities of their Bodies, but their Souls too; for many of them, it is to be feared, either never had, or have not made a right Use of such Opportunities of Christian Knowledge and Instruction, as are by your Liberality vouchsafed to these Infants.

BUT I must not anticipate what will be proper for me to say now I come to consider another View, which you may be supposed to have in this Undertaking, and that is, the publick Good of your Country.

IT must silence all Objections to these your Endeavours, from what Quarter soever they may come, if it appears that you are properly pursuing this noble End by them. For, as whatever obstructs that, ought for that Reason to be condemn'd, how specious and plausible soever the Pretences for it may be; so whatever really promotes that, should for that Reason also be encouraged, how much soever some may be offended at it.

AND yet, what is there that can be said to do this, if these your pious Endeavours do not? Does not the publick Happiness of any Country very much and very evidently depend upon the Manners and Qualifications of its Inhabitants? upon their behaving them-

selves

selves usefully and properly in their several Stations? And which Way can this desirable Thing be so reasonably expected, as from breeding up the meaner People under the Influence of good Instruction and Discipline? for, Is it not from the Disorders which Persons of this Rank more particularly are apt to fall into, occasioned partly by their Ignorance, partly by their Necessities, that the Mischiefs which the Magistrate is so often called upon to redress, do most commonly proceed? Who are they that, generally speaking, fill your Prisons and Houses of Correction; that so often invade the Property, and in their Violence spare not the Lives of their Neighbours; that with mischievous Intentions loiter and lurk in your Streets and Highways, putting you in Danger both at Home and Abroad; that by their idle and irregular Courses create great Troubles and Expences to their several Parishes, living as Drones upon the Industry of their honest Neighbours, many of whom perhaps are hard put to it to maintain themselves? Are they not Persons, for the most Part, descended as these poor Children are, and circumstanced, as in all Likelihood they would have been, had you not thus wisely extended your Piety to them? So that if these publick Evils should not be totally prevented by your encouraging this Kind of Education; yet I think we have all the reason in the World to hope, that it will mightily lessen them. And if it should not produce all those happy Effects to our Country, which we could wish to see, yet it can hardly fail of producing many, and probably more than we can so easily contribute to any other Way.

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I shall mention a few, which I think highly deserve the Approbation of us all: In the first Place then, it is a Means to furnish your Country with a Set of People of both Sexes, better qualified to make good Servants, than could otherwise be expected.

Now the main Properties of a good Servant are, Faithfulness, Humility and Diligence; and where can we so reasonably look for these Vertues, as in those Persons in whom the Corruptions that are natural to Men have been timely checked by wholesome Precepts, Instruction and Discipline? From whom can we have so good Security that these commendable Parts shall be performed, as from those who have been trained up to a competent Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and have thence learned that they serve a Master in Heaven, in the Service which they do to Men; and that this Master is intimately acquainted with every Secret of the Heart; so that how artfully soever they may abuse and impose upon their Masters upon Earth, no Fraud can escape either the Notice or the Punishment of him that is above.

THIS true, there must be added to the Properties abovementioned, a Capacity also for the Service that may be required. And to this it is sometimes necessary that there be both a strong and active Body, and likewise a quick and apprehensive Mind. And is there any Thing in this Education injurious in the least to either of these Endowments? it does not pretend indeed to bestow the one or the other, they are the immediate Gifts of God; but it certainly helps and improves the latter of them, while Nature her self takes Care of the other. It is enough in this Respect if there be nothing in it to impair that bodily Strength
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which Nature may have given ; and this I think there is not the least Room to accuse it of.

SOME I know have said, that the Nature of it is such, as is apt to puff the Children up with Pride and Conceit, and make them fancy themselves too good for many mean Offices, which Servants must necessarily do. But this, I hope, proceeds, if not from a Want of good Will to this Charity, yet from some Misinformations concerning it, rather than from any real Ground of Objection ; for it pretends to give them no other Improvements, than such as are very convenient, if not absolutely necessary to the most inferior People ; for what poor Man is there to whom it is not of Service to be able to read, and in a tolerable Manner to write and keep Account of the Matters, be they ever so mean, in which he may be concerned ? which is all this Education may be said in this Respect to aim at. And if such slender Attainments as these can create Pride in them, after so much Pains have been taken with them to prevent it ; after they are themselves so well able from the Word of GOD to condemn it ; and notwithstanding that strong Motive to Humility, which their very Education it self will always be with them, so long as they shall remember how charitably it was bestowed upon them : Surely they would have been infected with this Vice to a greater Degree, had they, for Want of this Education, been left to the Dictates of corrupted Nature.

HOWEVER, if in some few Instances it hath happened, that more than the ordinary Improvements which this Charity intends, have been given to these Children, by which they have become conceited, and raised, in their own Opinions, above their Circumstances,

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stances, let the Blame lie where it ought; not upon the Nature, or the Design of this Charity, but upon the Masters or Mistresses of those several Schools, where these Things have been unwarrantably done; or upon some other Persons that may, more innocently than wisely, have been concerned in directing that they should be done; and let Care be taken that no such Indiscretions be committed for the future.

THUS also you lend a helping Hand to the Furtherance and Improvement of your Country's Trade, to which these Children, in the Way they are educated, may be made very serviceable. For to the successful carrying on of this, it is necessary that Multitudes should be bred up (as they generally are) to the manufacturing Arts, and a reasonable Knowledge in Accounts; and the more we breed up this Way, the more may we expect to see those ingenious Arts improve; it being natural for People of the same Profession to be emulous; and Emulation always begets Improvements.

IN former Ages, indeed, when the Wealth of our Country consisted chiefly in the Produce of our Lands, there was not that Need for this Method of Education which there is at present: For now we must either take Care to furnish the several Branches of our Trade with proper Artists and Craftsmen, or we must expect to fall from that great Plenty which we have long enjoyed, and lose many valuable Conveniencies of Life, which now we cannot well be without, or at least cannot contentedly part with: And whence can these several Branches be so well supply'd with their proper Artists and Craftsmen, as from these Schools of Charity, where Youth may be had, not only well pre-

prepared to enter upon Business, but such as from the Meanness of their Circumstances, will be more willing to undergo the Fatigues of Labour, more teachable and industrious, than can be expected from Persons of better Condition; and considering the Congregation I speak to, and the Circumstances of this great and populous City where we live, I hope I am using no improper Argument to conciliate your Favour to this Design, by the Hints which I have given you, how serviceable it may be made to the Trade of our Country.

BUT I have another Argument in Reserve, proper for this Head, which I persuade my self will be more prevalent with you still; and that is, the great Support that these Charity Schools are, under GOD, to the Cause of Christianity.

LET it not be thought of little Consequence to the Faith, that the meaner People be carefully instructed in it; for it was the Will of GOD, we know, that by them it should be first embraced and propagated. *Te know your Calling, (says St. Paul) that not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things which are mighty; and base Things of the World, and the Things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that are.*

AND tho' we are not now to expect from these Instruments (as Thanks be to GOD we don't need) such mighty and astonishing Successes in the Work of Conversion upon all Ranks and Orders of Men,

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as God was then pleased, for the greater Testimony to the Truth, to effect by their Means; yet when we consider the great Numbers of this Sort of People, and the Freedom and Familiarity wherewith they converse together, by which it comes to pass that they strangely insinuate their Vertues or Vices into one another, we cannot but think it a great Strengthening to the Interests of the Faith, that they are taught so well to understand it.

We charitably hope that all whom we thus carefully educate in it, will make good Men; and we hope it the more, because we take them early into our Care, before their natural Corruptions (which 'tis the Business of this Education to subdue) have acquired any great Strength in them, by which Means the Impressions which it makes upon them, in Favour of Truth and Goodness, are made to great Advantage; and so as they will not easily, and without a Temper more than ordinarily set upon Wickedness, be razed out.

BUT if these Plants should not *all* of them answer the Culture and good Husbandry that have been laid out upon them, yet we have no Reason to doubt but *many* of them will; and considering the hopeless State we took them out of, I may venture to say, that as many of them as do answer and bear good Fruit, are in a Manner so many Souls clearly gain'd to the Cause of God and his Truth.

AND let it move no one to envy us, if here I should say, that by these Schools we contribute more particularly to the Encrease and still further Security of our holy and reform'd Communion. Some of these Infants might possibly have fallen into Hands that would have principled them in Prejudices against it; but we

have

have that Confidence in it, that we never fear losing any of its Members, out of Motives purely conscientious, that have once been rightly grounded in its Principles, and have had the Happiness to be train'd up under the Influence of its Administrations. All we wish, in order to bring over those, who as unhappily on their own Parts, as causelessly on ours, divide from us, is, that they would make themselves better acquainted with those Ordinances they are pleas'd to find Fault with; for we cannot think so meanly of their Judgment and Understanding in spiritual Things, as to suppose, that, if they had been educated in the Way of our Communion, as carefully as we hope these little ones are, they would ever have departed from it; but, on the contrary, have employ'd that Zeal in its Favour with which they now oppose it.

MAY I to these publick-spirited Views subjoin one that respects your selves, *viz.* the future Recompence of Reward? And surely I may, without Offence to the most elevated Piety, for it is the Motive with which the Scriptures themselves do every where invite us to do Good. May I mention this, I say? we have already in this Discourse suggested to you in what a superlative manner Charities of this Kind do entitle us to that.

LET me add here, however, that he that would indulge such a laudable Ambition, hath in my Opinion as great a Scope given him for it in this particular Way of doing Good, as in any other he can possibly put himself into; for my part I freely own, that I know of no Acts of Religion of any Kind that are naturally productive of greater Honour to GOD, or of more valuable and lasting Benefits to Mankind, than our Zeal in this very Thing is: And it is as certain that we shall be rewarded in Proportion to the Good that was the

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the natural Issue of our Actions, as we shall be punished answerably to the Evil that was the proper Consequence of our Sins. Every Soul that by your Means shall be thus brought to Salvation, will add to the Felicity wherewith you shall enjoy your own; and the Crown which you your selves shall wear, will receive a brighter Lustre from the Reflections of those which you have been instrumental in setting on the Heads of others.

GOD is not unrighteous that he should forget any of the Labours which you have undertaken for his Name's Sake; nor is he streighten'd in his Bounty, that any Part of the Good which you have either done or intended, should go without its full Recompence. Intended, I say, for he is not so ungenerous, if I may so express my self, as to take Advantage of his Creatures Want of Power. He is too noble in his Nature to proportion his Rewards only to the scanty Measures in which our Labours have been successful; but in every Case accepts the Will for the Deed, where that was all that we could contribute towards it. So that tho' you should be frustrated in any, or even all the good Ends proposed by this Charity, with Respect to others, you are nevertheless sure to be Gainers by it your selves: whatever the Success may be, your Intentions do certainly entitle you to the Promise that is made to such as *turn many to Righteousness.*

BUT this is what we are not willing to suppose for your Sakes, the Masters and Mistresses, I mean, to whom the Trust of this important Charity is more immediately committed, for upon you, under GOD, it principally depends whether the Work shall prosper, and the Good that is intended by it shall be accomplished, or no; to your Instruction and Correction, wisely and seasonably

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given; to your Watchfulness over the Ways and Manners of these Children, it will be chiefly owing, if they prove answerable to our Expectations. The Thanks of many Families will then be due to you for the Benefit of good and faithful Servants of the whole Commonwealth, for many industrious and useful Members; of all good Christians in general, and those of our own Church in particular, for the Strength you have added, and the seasonable Support you have brought to the Interests of GOD's true Religion. And which is above all, the Prayers of these Children themselves shall return with the choicest Blessings upon you, for the Part you have sustained in their happy Education.

BUT, on the other Hand, give me Leave to remind you, that to your Neglects it will be chiefly imputed, if the mighty Hopes we have conceived from this Undertaking be *not* answer'd. And, instead of the Thanks and Praises, you will incur the Blame and Obloquy of your whole Country; instead of the Prayers of these Infants, when grown up, and the Blessings that by their Means would have descended upon you, you will probably be persecuted with their Curses, for the great Advantages which they have irretrievably lost through you. And if all this should be justly due to you, what a dreadful Account will you have to give of your Stewardship? How will you be able to face at the great Tribunal the many worthy Benefactors, whose Liberality you have basely abused, and whose pious Intentions you have wickedly defeated? How heavy will your Condemnation be, when the Loss of so many Souls, as were committed to you in their Innocence, will be laid to your Charge? But I trust in GOD that this Affair will be conducted to a much more com-

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fortable Issue; and that in order thereto, you will every one of you seriously consider of the great Importance of the Charge which you have taken upon you, and set your selves to execute it with the utmost Care, Diligence, and Fidelity.

AND here I can't advise you better, than to recommend to your frequent Perusal those excellent Directions, given you by our Right Reverend Dioecesan; wherein you will observe, among other Things essential to the due Execution of your Trust, how necessary it is to the Success of this good Design, that Notions of Loyalty and Affection to his present Majesty's Person, Family and Government, be inculcated on the Minds of these Children, as the only Way to prevent some Suspensions, which otherwise may be entertained to its Prejudice; and as a Means by which it may be assured of the Favour and Protection of those, who, by their Stations and Authority, are best able to befriended it.

THUS, with the Blessing of GOD, shall it be effectually secured from miscarrying in your Hands; especially if, as Occasions fall out, you be ready to consult, and willing to be advised, by your Superiours in the Trust; those I mean, who have judged you worthy of it, and have committed it to you; for be assured, that Self-Conceit, and Opiniativeness of one's own Sufficiency, are no good Qualifications in any Persons, or in any Case; and with Respect to you, and the Part you sustain in this Affair, I must observe, that they neither become your Station, nor can be of any Service to the Work you are employ'd in; a modest and humble Deference in you to the Judgment of such Benefactors, as are willing to advise you, is much more likely to advance it, and will certainly make more for your Reputation and Interest.

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BUT far be this, and all other Complaints that may give the least Disturbance to this pious Undertaking: May the Peace of GOD rule in all your Hearts, while you are thus intent in promoting his Honour; and may his Holy Spirit powerfully co-operate with your Labours, to the procuring for this Church and Nation the manifold Blessings you propose, till every Heart that hath hitherto harden'd it self against you shall melt, and confess that GOD is with you of a Truth.

To which GOD, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Glory and Power, Thanksgiving and Praise, now and ever.





A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of

St. SEPULCHRE,

JUNE 13. 1728.

Being THURSDAY in WHITSON-WEEK,

By THOMAS TALDEN, D.D.

Prebendary of Chulmleigh in Devon.

ISAIAH lviii. 10, 11.

*If thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and
satisfie the afflicted Soul; then shall thy Light
rise in Obscurity, and thy Darkness be as the
Noon-day.*

And the Lord shall guide thee continually.

N this Chapter, the Prophet *Isaiab* is giving
a lively and pathetical Description to the
Jews in general, of a Vice and a Virtue;
the most opposite in their Natures, and the farthest
distant from each other in their Qualities, of any that
are to be found in Practice amongst the Sons of Men.

The

the most Excellent Kind of Charity. 549

The One, a most notorious and abominable Sin, in common Use, and of ancient Custom, amongst them: The Other, the most transcendent and beneficial of all human Virtues; though neglected, and almost wholly laid aside, even by their strictest Pretenders to Piety and Religion.

THE general Vice that the Prophet is here reprehending them for, was their formal and detestable Hypocrisy towards GOD: and because they did not think, that so provoking and scandalous a Wickedness was Crime sufficient of it self; but still they grew the more arrogant and presumptuous, upon this their counterfeit Zeal and pretended Righteousness. Thus drawing down the Vengeance and just Indignation of Heaven upon the Land, by such an impious and provoking Behaviour to the Almighty.

BUT, on the other Side, he earnestly exhorts them to embrace Charity as a healing Virtue, and effectually to apply the mitigating Remedies of good Works, for the common Benefit of their own Souls. Because Charity is a Sacrifice the most grateful and acceptable to GOD; and the best Attonement that they were capable of making to expiate a National Guilt: And because their darling and most admired Sin sinks and debases human Nature to the lowest Degree of Infamy and Contempt, as it renders every Hypocrite odious to GOD, and despicable in the Eyes of Men.

THEREFORE he labours to convince them, on the contrary, that neglected Charity, if frequently and beneficently applied by them to miserable and unhappy Objects; it would certainly then entitle them to the indulgent Favour and Protection of Heaven; and raise them up to as high and glorious a Pitch of Happiness and

Perfection, as they were capable of attaining to in this World.

BUT, that we may discover more clearly, in what manner this impious but most beloved Vanity was practised amongst the *Jews*; it is represented here by *Isaiab*, to consist chiefly in the Pride and Ostentation of seeming strictly to observe their frequent and solemn Fasts; but in Reality performing the Duty no farther than a sorrowful dejected Look, a slow Pace, an affected Dress, and all the Artifice of mere outward Disguise could contribute, to impose upon the World; and to make them appear more plausibly as righteous to the publick View.

AND the same Character we find they punctually maintain'd for many Ages after the Prophet's Days, as we are assured by our Blessed Saviour himself, *Matth. vi. 16.* where he cautions his Disciples, *When you fast, be not as the Hypocrites, of a sad Countenance; for they disfigure their Faces, that they may appear unto Men to Fast: But thou, when thou Fastest, anoint thy Head, and wash thy Face; that thou appear not unto Men to Fast.*

BUT we cannot view the Folly and Deformity of this Vice, nor the Wisdom and transcendent Beauties of the Virtue here prescribed, in more proper, lively, and natural Colours, than by the advantageous Light *Isaiab* has placed them in, as directly opposite to each other.

HE begins this Chapter, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my People their Transgression, and the House of Jacob their Sins.* And having first exposed their false and vain Pretences to fulfil the Righteousness of the Law, and their more im-

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the most Excellent Kind of Charity. 551

udent Boasts of not forsaking the Ordinances of their GOD; he introduces them in the 3^d Verse, expostulating thus prophanely with the Almighty: *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our Soul, and thou takest no Knowledge?*

BUT in the Person of GOD, the Prophet thus replies: *In the Day of your Fast you find Pleasure, and exact all your Labours. Behold, ye fast for Strife and Debate, and to smite with the Fist of Wickedness: Is it such a Fast as I have chosen? a Day for a Man to afflict his Soul? is it to bow down his Head as a Bulrush, and to spread Sackcloth and Ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a Fast, and an acceptable Day to the Lord?*

Is not this the Fast that I have chosen? Is it not to deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and that thou bring the Poor that are cast out to thy House? When thou seest the Naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thy self from thine own Flesh?

Then shall thy Light break forth as the Morning, and thine Health shall spring forth speedily: and thy Righteousness shall go before thee, the Glory of the Lord shall be thy Reward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and satisfy the afflicted Soul: then shall thy Light rise in Obscurity, and thy Darkness be as the Noon-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually.

IN discoursing on these Words, as suitable to the present Occasion, I shall observe the following Method.

First, I will shew the Reasonableness and Necessity of our putting in Practice this important Duty proposed: *to draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and*

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to satisfy the afflicted Soul: And why we that are Christians lie under greater Obligations to perform it, than the *Jews* did.

Secondly, I will shew that no kind of Charity can come up to that exquisite Degree of doing Good, as the bestowing a pious and virtuous Education does, upon distressed Orphans and poor Children. Because it is *raising Light out of Obscurity*, and making *their Darknefs as the Noon-day*.

Thirdly, IN respect to the Patrons and generous Benefactors of so extensive, useful, and publick a Charity, as appears at present before us: I will shew, that their Labour is not in vain in the Lord; because of the great and glorious Reward promis'd in my Text; *and the Lord shall guide thee continually*.

I shall draw some proper Inferences from the whole, and conclude.

First, I am to shew the Reasonableness and Necessity of our putting in Practice this important Duty propos'd: *to draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and to satisfy the afflicted Soul*. And why we that are Christians lie under greater Obligations to perform it, than the *Jews* did.

As *Isaiab* was descended from the Royal House of the Kings of *Judah*, and had all the Advantages of the politer Education of a Court: So is he as much distinguish'd by an Elegancy of Stile, and the Sublimity of his Writings, as by his high Birth, and the sacred Character of a most celebrated Prophet.

AND first we may observe, that *Isaiab*, in representing Charity as the most excellent of all Virtues,

as the most acceptable to GOD, and beneficial to our Neighbour; that he may the more effectually raise so tender and generous a Warmth in us; he does not apply to our inferior Passions and Affections, nor does he endeavour to move the Parts that are Mortal of us; as knowing the Heart of Man to be too wicked and obdurate to conceive it, and his Bosom too unclean and impure to bring forth so transcendent and divine a Grace: But he addresses himself directly to his immortal Soul, as to a Spirit nearer ally'd to so sublime and exalted a Virtue. Because the Soul of Man, by its Nature, and in its Being, is everlasting; and because it has the Image and Resemblance of the Almighty fairly stamp'd and impress'd upon it; and therefore is the more susceptible of a Passion so glorious and extensive as Charity; that is a Beam flowing from the divine Love, and approaches the nearest to infinite Mercy and Pity.

THE Precept deliver'd here by the Prophet, is, *If thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and satisfie the afflicted Soul*; that is, if thou rightly dispose every kind and affectionate Inclination within thee to do Good; and if thou wilt freely exert all the generous and beneficent Faculties of thy Soul, until it has a just Sense of the Distress and Miseries of the Poor; if thy tender Pity is productive of bounteous and charitable Works; and if thy Compassion pleads effectually to comfort and relieve the wretched and afflicted; *Then shall thy Light break forth as the Morning, and thy Health shall spring forth speedily; thy Righteousness shall go before thee, and the Glory of the Lord shall be thy Reward.*

FROM hence it appears, that *to draw out the Soul to the Hungry, and to satisfie the afflicted Soul*, was imputed

as Righteousness, to the charitably disposed under the Law. But it is here to be observed, that the *Jews* were not tied down by such strict Penalties, nor bound by such severe Obligations to perform this Duty, as we Christians, under the Oeconomy of the Gospel, are obliged to the utmost of our Power and Abilities to discharge it.

For what was accounted *Righteousness* under the Law, does not come up to the Character of *Holiness* under the Gospel. Because the former was founded chiefly upon Rewards of temporal Happiness, and had rarely any Views beyond the Blessings and Enjoyments of this present Life. The Promise of the Covenant being — *That thou mayst live in the Land to possess it, and that it may be well with thee all thy Days, and with thy Children after thee.* But the latter is built upon Hopes full of Immortality and Glory; and regards this World only as the necessary Passage to prepare us for a far better Life to come.

Thus the *Jews* generally entertain'd but obscure Notions, and had only imperfect Views of a Future State; for tho' the Prophet *Daniel* had cleared up this Point in his *xiii*th Chapter and 2^d Verse, when he says — *Many of them that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt:* Yet for all this plain Text, we find the *Sadducees*, one of the most prevailing Sects amongst them, openly denied the Resurrection of the Dead, the Being of Angels, and the Existences of Spirits, or the Souls of Men departed, which they affirmed to be as mortal as their Bodies, and to perish with them. And their Law consisting chiefly of Types, and Shadows of the good Things not yet reveal'd;

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therefore they wanted many of those noble Motives and Inducements that we have in the Gospel, to lay up in Store by their good Works for another World; or to make Provision by their Charity to the Poor, in everlasting Habitations: Which occasioned St. Paul to tell them, *that Life and Immortality were brought to Light by the Gospel.*

HENCE therefore we must consider Charity, as it stood under the Dispensation of the old Law, as an eminent Virtue, proceeding from those two generous Motives of *Love* and *Pity*; and as it naturally flow'd from a tender and compassionate Concern produced in them by a fellow-feeling of the Misery and Wants that the unhappy suffer'd. And then their Charity will appear in this View, to be only an innate and voluntary Emotion of the Will; not to be extorted by Force or Violence, nor by any human Power or Terrors to be compell'd.

BECAUSE Love is naturally a lawless and arbitrary Passion of the Soul, moving only by secret and uncontrollable Springs within us; and Pity is a soft interceding Quality of the Mind, that insensibly disposes and works us up to benevolent Acts of Mercy and Goodness. By Affection and Inclination they freely and readily exert themselves to such Objects as are suitable and properly adapted to them: But Violence destroys the very Nature and Being of Love; and to compel Pity, or endeavour to raise Compassion by Force in us, is certainly an Attempt as unnatural in the Design of it, as it is impossible to be reduced into Practice.

AND from hence the Excellency and Perfection of the Christian Religion will evidently appear, since that alone was capable of infusing this generous Passion of
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universal Love into our Hearts, by the strong Obligations of a necessary and essential Duty, and of imitating our Blessed Lord and Saviour, who *went about doing Good*; and to enforce Pity and Compassion in our Breasts, as Dispositions absolutely requisite to qualifie us for true and real Members of his Church.

For this was a Design that no earthly Power could effect; nor any humane Laws or Ordinances could ever bring to pass, before our Blessed Saviour came into the World, in the Fulness of Time, to accomplish it. The Philosophers indeed, and the Sages of Old, by their Writings and moral Precepts, had long labour'd to establish it, but still attempted it in vain: Nor could any Artifice or Contrivance, formed by the Wit of Man, ever fully compleat so great and glorious a Scheme, for the general Good and Benefit of Mankind, until the Gospel of our Blessed Lord made universal Love a fundamental Rule of our Practice; and constituted Charity as the most firm, solid, and lasting Basis, to support and propagate the Christian Religion upon, over the Face of the whole Earth.

And it was this universal Charity, this unbounded Love, and compassionate Disposition, so eminently conspicuous amongst the Faithful, that in the early Ages of the Church proved almost as effectual and perswasive in gaining Profelytes, and in bringing over Converts to Christianity, as even the Preaching of the holy Apostles themselves; or those wonderful Miracles that they wrought, to plant and confirm it amongst us.

Thus Love and Charity, as they are the Glory and distinguishing Characters of the Christian Religion, so are they our best Claim, under the Merits of our Blessed Saviour, to the Kingdom of Heaven. For they

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are the very Image and Similitude of the Almighty in us; and are that Perfection in our Nature, whereby we nearest approach to, and resemble him. For when at the Creation he had breathed the Soul of Man in his own Likeness into his Nostrils; during his happy State of Innocency, it retain'd its divine Original, and continued fair, guiltless, and untarnished. But Sin soon defaced, sully'd, and impair'd its native Beauties, corrupted and depraved all the generous Qualities and nobler Faculties of his Mind; therefore our Blessed Redeemer came in the Flesh, by the Holiness of his Life, and the Purity of his Doctrine, to raise up again our fallen State, and to restore them in us to their genuine Purity and Lustre.

NOW that so great and glorious a Work as this could be accomplished by no other Means but by CHRIST, the Wisdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD, I will make yet more fully to appear to you.

FOR if we consider the Nature and End of human Laws in general, and the original Design of them, we shall then find, that they were principally instituted to restrain the Wicked, and were chiefly formed in Terror to the evil Doers; and consequently contrived rather to secure us in the quiet Possession of our Rights and Properties, than to make Provision for the Poor, or to alleviate the Miseries and Misfortunes of Mankind. Hence it is, that we may observe in every Country, that there is more Care taken in compiling of their Laws, to guard against the Corruptions of humane Nature, and the Depravity of Mens Minds, than to encourage Piety, to reward Vertue, to support the Poor, or to promote Society, Love and Friendship amongst them.

NAY, even the Divine Law, that was delivered to *Moses*, as a Mediator of the Covenant betwixt God and his People, and written by the Finger of the Almighty upon two Tables of Stone; it was founded upon this general Plan, and consists chiefly of Negative Precepts, and Restrictive Commands: Such as, *Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt do no Murder, Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Goods*. Here indeed our general Peace and Security are consulted, and our Lives and Properties are legally preserved: But in the whole Decalogue there are no Injunctions laid down for Acts of Beneficence and Kindness! no positive Obligations to Love and Charity, to promote the publick Good, or to relieve the Wants and Miseries of those in Distress and under Afflictions!

BUT a Design so great and glorious as this, seems rather to have been reserved for the Gospel of our Lord *JESUS CHRIST*; as for a Law more perfect and consummate than ever was revealed before; and that was to remain in Force as long as the World endures.

BUT BECAUSE it proceeds on Maxims more truly generous and sublime, than human Policy could ever come up to; or than Science and Philosophy, with all their boasted Arts and Speculations, could comprehend. For the Gospel being founded upon Principles of universal Love, and a Charity as extensive as the whole Race of Mankind; it instructs us, by doing Good to others, the noblest and securest Way of being eternally happy and blest our selves. Since our Bounty in drawing out our Souls to the Hungry, and the kind and liberal Provision we make, to satisfy the afflicted Soul, is laying up in Store Funds of never-failing Treasures

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for our selves in Heaven; and our good Works of Mercy and Pity, practis'd here on Earth, will certainly intitle us to eternal Joy and Happiness in everlasting Habitations.

I proceed now, as propos'd under my Second Head,

Secondly, To shew, that no kind of Charity can come up to that exquisite Degree of doing Good, as the bestowing a pious and virtuous Education upon distressed Orphans and poor Children: *Because it is raising Light out of Obscurity, and making their Dark-ness as the Noon-day.*

As I have already shew'd the Necessity and publick Benefit of Charity in general, by supporting the Miserable and Wretched under the heavy Pressure of their common Wants and Afflictions: Let us in the Second Place, consider, as more immediately relating to the Solemn Occasion of our present Assembling; that to make a proper Provision for the immortal and rational Soul, and to embellish and improve the Mind and Understanding, are a much more weighty and important Concern incumbent upon us, than any other Care that we ought to take of our mortal Part, the frail and perishing Body.

For the nobler Faculties of the Mind lay a higher Claim to our Love, and they work stronger upon our natural Affections, than any outward Wants, or the cravings of our grosser Appetites, can reasonably be supposed to do. Because the Honour and the Dignity of humane Nature are more immediately touch'd and concern'd for the one, than they are for the other.

For any remarkable Defects in the Sense and Understanding, such as stupid Ignorance, obstinate Error,
and

and blind Superstition, that are generally owing to the Want of a good Education; or to the not being better instructed when young; they certainly move our Pity and Regret more sensibly, and by a nearer Kind of Affinity touch our Souls, than any other Sort of Wants or Misfortunes that can befall Flesh and Blood, thro' Poverty, Accident, or Neglect. Because we are more immediately affected with whatsoever betrays a Man to Ignominy, Shame and Reproach, as it is a Scandal and Dishonour to human Nature in general, than for the greatest Calamities and Sufferings that can happen unto him by the Will of Heaven, or by the usual Changes and Chances of this World.

AND the Reason for this is obvious; because we are often forced to blush our selves, and are ashamed to see a human Creature want the Use and Advantages of that Reason which is so essential to his Nature, and that denominates his very Being: Therefore the Defects of it in any one, reflects a Sort of Dishonour upon his whole Kind; for which we can only grieve, and be sorry for our selves, when it is not in our Power to help or prevent it: And hence it is, that we are generally less sensibly affected, and not so nearly touched with Uneasiness and Concern for those under any other Kind of Calamities or Misfortunes; because to be wretched or distressed, is no Shame or Reproach to the Person that suffers it: and because we can readily ease our own Trouble and Pain for them, by relieving those unhappy Circumstances that first occasioned them.

THUS to have an anxious and a truly compassionate Regard for the deplorable Ignorance and Brutality, that so frequently attend Poverty and Want, shews a Disposition in us full of Humanity and Goodness, and

a Spirit eminently generous and publick. Hence it is, that an ingenuous and kind Temper, with Anxiety and Regret, observes the intellectual Faculties of hopeful and promising Youth, to be obscured and darkned for Want only of those necessary Helps and Supports that should cherish and improve them. And when some bounteous Hand, with well-timed Charity, has removed those unhappy Difficulties, that like a dark Cloud overcast and concealed good natural Parts: How often does it happen, that with an early Care, and due cultivating, there are Discoveries made of many a pregnant and happy Genius, and of great and good Abilities.

FROM hence, then, we may fairly conclude, that the kindest and most beneficial Office that we can perform for our Fellow-Creature in Distress, is when the Almighty has laid the firm Foundation of Reason, and well disposed all the secret Springs and Faculties of the Understanding, in some poor unhappy Orphan, left destitute of all worldly Means, and entirely deprived of every Support necessary to carry on the Finishing and Improvement of them: How blessed! how glorious a Work is it! early to inform the Mind of such a one, and to let in the Light of Knowledge upon his Soul; who must otherwise sit in Darkness all his Days, and remain for Life under the Shadow of Death.

THEREFORE such compassionate and indulgent Patrons, from whose bounteous Charity flows the clear and comfortable Beams of pure Religion to indigent Youth, and who illuminate their Understandings with moral Knowledge and human Learning; they are Benefactors to their Souls as well as Bodies; and make

the kindest and best Provision for their rational Beings, and the Dignity of their Natures, by raising up their Thoughts towards Heaven, by enlarging their Apprehensions, and opening such a Variety of pleasing Prospects to their Minds, that, like the Day-spring from on High, it gives them a delightful Taste of Virtue and real Happiness in this World, and guides their Feet more directly into the Ways of Peace and Eternal Life.

2dly, I shall next proceed to urge some such proper Motives and Considerations as may more effectually induce us to promote this peculiar and noble Kind of Charity amongst us.

AND first, if we consider our selves as rational Creatures, it is the most evident Proof that we can give the World, of our own Humanity and Religion, to have a just Sense and Regard to the Wants of the Mind in tender and forlorn Children; and by our own Generosity and Piety, to advance and improve the Growth of that Reason and Understanding in them, which are the most honourable and distinguishing Characters of our own Natures; and that rank us so highly above all other Species of mortal Creatures in the whole Universe.

2dly, **LET** us next consider these distressed Orphans and Poor Children, as they bear the lively Image of their great Creator, and as they are indued with so noble and excellent a Nature; and let us reflect on them, as the most perfect of all sublunary Beings by their Kind, as they are naturally born to Power and Superiority; and to whom all other Ranks of Creatures in the World are inferiour, and put in Subjection to them. These we must acknowledge are all strong

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the most Excellent Kind of Charity. 563

Motives to Love, and to regard them as such; and the highest Inducements to assist and do them all the good Offices within the Compass of our Power to perform.

3^{dly}, WE may yet further consider, that the reasonable and immortal Soul of Man, is of infinitely more Value than the whole six Days Creation beside; as it bears a Resemblance, in a lower degree, of almost every Perfection in the divine Creator. For if we take Infinity from the Omnipotence, the Omniscience, and Omnipresence of GOD; then whatsoever is an Attribute of GOD, becomes a Faculty of Man. For the Almighty has impressed upon our Souls the Features of his own Divinity; and if I may dare to say, represented himself in little. And shall we not then think every unhappy Orphan, and poor Child, intitled to our more immediate Care of those Faculties which are derived from such a great and glorious Original? Or can our Charity and Bounty be any Ways better employ'd, than in the Cultivating and Advancement of them?

Lastly, LET us consider these young Children as unhappy Beings of our own Kind, whom GOD daily continues in their Existence, supports by his Providence, cherishes with his Love, and seems anxious and concerned for their Salvation. And in this Way of thinking we cannot but conclude, that if each of these are Objects of eternal and divine Love; if they are Beings, for whose Sake our Blessed Saviour condescended to partake of the Infirmities of their Nature, and to suffer for them a painful and ignominious Death on the Cross, to save them from eternal Destruction, and to crown them with everlasting Happiness and Glory; then certainly we must acknowledge them all to be worthy of

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our tenderest Care and Endeavours, to promote and help forward so good and gracious a Work.

IF all these are not prevalent Motives to raise our Affection and Pity for them! and if Considerations of this Kind are not sufficient to *provoke us unto Love and to good Works!* then all Thought and Reflexion must become useless and depraved Faculties in us: and Reason, Humanity, and Revelation, will appear as so many Blessings perverted and bestowed upon us in vain.

III^{dly}, I proceed to shew how far this pious Education of poor Children contributes to the Glory of God, and to the Honour and Benefit of our Established Church and Government.

AND *first*, if we consider the numerous Seminaries and religious Houses that have been endow'd abroad by our Roman Catholicks, since the Time of the Reformation; and their many secret Schools and Nurseries for the training up their indigent and necessitous Youth here at home: It may at the first View appear, as a Matter of Shame and Reproach to our Church, that the Members of it were for so many Years less vigilant and solicitous in this Point, than their Adversaries of Rome were; by overlooking and neglecting so long this prudent and political Way of instructing the Children of our Poor in the Principles of Religion; and, by the Knowledge of Letters, qualifying them for Trades, or any other kind of Employments.

BECAUSE by this Method of grounding them early in the Truth, and by well instructing them in the Reasons of that Faith they profess; many of those might have been secured and settled in our own Communion, that by the Artifice of Popish Emissaries have been betray'd to embrace Idolatry and Superstition for Bread;

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as well as many others, who have been gained over to Sectaries and Dissenters, on Views of worldly Interest : And what is yet more deplorable, Numbers of those, who, for Want of such an Education, have fallen into wicked, profligate, and most abandoned Courses of Life ; without any Sense of Shame, Religion, or even the Belief of a G O D.

B U T it is very remarkable to observe, that Divine Providence often reserves its chief and signal Blessings in Store against the Times of Tryal and Sufferings, when Sorrows depress, and Afflictions have cast down the People of G O D, as the most proper Season to vindicate his own Honour and Glory in ; and to raise up and comfort his distressed Church with the greater Prosperity and Power. And from such an unhappy Period of Time, in our own Days, we must date the Original, the Growth and Progress of this excellent and useful Charity now before us.

F O R it was when Popery had begun to make open and violent Invasions upon our Religion and Laws, under an unfortunate and misguided Prince, blinded with Zeal, and bigotted to Superstition ; whose first Step from that Church he was educated in, and for which his Royal Father died an ever-blessed and glorious Martyr, was that fatal and unhappy Step, that lost him the Hearts and Affections of his truly loving Subjects ; and led him insensibly from one Act of Violence to another, till he abdicated his Kingdoms, and was deprived of his Crown and Dignity.

I N this short but gloomy Reign it was, when the subtle and projecting Jesuits, under the Patronage, and by the indulgent Favour of the Court, had erected a Seminary in *Westminster*, to instruct and breed up our Poor Chil-

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dren in; that under the fair and plausible Pretence of bestowing a free and liberal Education upon them, they might more easily pervert and corrupt them, with their pernicious Principles and damnable Doctrines.

BUT this soon alarm'd some active, generous, and publick Spirits in that Place; who, in order to defeat their Designs, and to prevent their Youth from falling into a Snare so specious and beneficial in all outward Appearance as this was, immediately set up a Charity-School there, as well to instruct the Children of the poor Inhabitants in Letters, and the Principles of their Religion; as to keep them from falling into the dangerous Hands, and under the Tuition of such crafty and insinuating Enemies, as at that Time so openly beset them.

UPON this remarkable Occasion was the first Charity-School * erected amongst us, with so pious and prudent a View, and with such happy and prosperous Success, that from it, as from the Original Root, which was well planted, and in due Season; there have since sprung up all these numerous and fruitful Branches, that have not only spread over this vast City, but extended themselves throughout the whole Kingdom in general.

AND we may further add, by the Blessing of Heaven, with this wonderful and good Effect, that Numbers and Multitudes of our common People, who before were less disposed to Conformity, and more inclinable to follow Error, and be fond of Division; they are now, by all the strongest Ties of Interest, Gratitude and Affection, brought back to a just Sense of their Duty, and Obligations to
their

* It was set up *Lady-Day* 1688, by the Gentlemen of the New Church in St. Margaret Westminster, for 50 Poor Boys; and is now known by the Name of the *Blue-Coat* School.

their charitable and indulgent Mother Church. Whilst their Children, by a constant Succession, are brought up and educated in such good Principles, and sound Doctrine, as will settle and confirm them in the true Faith, and make them grow up like firm Walls and stout Bulwarks, to strengthen and maintain the Establishment of it against all Opposers, of what Opinion or Perswasions soever.

BUT this very Artifice and Policy of the Jesuits, who vainly flattered themselves, that by thus erecting Schools and Academies in this great Metropolis, at so favourable a Juncture to them, it would prove an infallible Method to sap and undermine the very Foundation of our Religion, by perverting Numbers of our common Youth by their Discipline, and gaining fairer Opportunities, by that Means, of corrupting their Parents and Relations, as having the easier Access to them, upon the Account of their Children; and laying Obligations upon them, by the insidious Care and Pains taken in their Education.

BUT by a signal and happy Turn of Providence, they are now thrown so much farther backward in any future Attempts and Contrivances of this Kind, by their own Project recoiling so severely upon them, as to overthrow their finest laid Schemes, and intirely to blast and ruin their best concerted Designs. Since it was they that first occasion'd this charitable Disposition in us, to teach and instruct the Poor, to open the Eyes of the Ignorant, and inform the Understandings of the Weak, Young, and Helpless; for these are the Persons on whom they generally make their violentest Attacks, and ground all their little Success upon; as being the best qualified, by their Weakness and Ignorance, to make Converts to a Church, that requires a blind and implicit Obedience from all her Votaries. But now, on the contrary, they will find that

many Thousands of the common People, that formerly they used to make a Prey of, will be able, for the future, to defend and maintain the Faith they profess; and will be well arm'd and prepared to hold out against all the fallacious Arts, and insinuating Arguments, of so unfair and disengenuous Adversaries.

Lastly, As the charitable Education of these Poor Children is of so great a Consequence to our Church, so is it no less useful to the Government, and beneficial to the Nation in general.

AND this will more evidently appear, if we seriously consider the many infamous and detestable Examples that are daily to be met with in this large and populous City; and but reflect upon the flagrant and notorious Crimes so common and frequently committed amongst us, by those, who, for Want of such an Education, and of a due Care being taken of them when young; by corrupt Manners, idle Lives, and vicious Habits, give themselves entirely up to all manner of Lewdness and Debauchery, till they grow abandon'd to Infamy and Shame; a Burden and a Curse to the Publick, as well as a Scandal and a Reproach to their own Kind.

WHAT a Benefit then! and what a common Blessing must arise to the Publick! by the inexpressible Good that is done, and the many ill Consequences that are prevented by this your Goodness and charitable Care extended to these poor Orphans and distressed Children, in restraining them from falling into the common and ensnaring Paths of Wickedness and Vice; from the Contagion of evil Company and pernicious Examples; and by generously rescuing them from the many Temptations to Ruin, that Poverty and Idleness would otherwise certainly expose them to. Thus all their Happiness and Security in this World, they owe to the inestimable Blessing of a religious and
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moral Education ; and their future Prosperity and Plenty in it, to your Liberality in furnishing them with those Means and Abilities to live honestly and industriously, that their Parents could not, and that Providence had not, but by your Hands, provided for them.

FROM hence therefore it appears, that thus to cherish the tender and most defenceless Part of human Kind, and to support so many young destitute Orphans, and poor helpless Children of both Sexes, by Educating them in the sound Principles of Virtue and Religion, in Duty, Love and Loyalty to their King, in Submission and Obedience to Magistrates, and all those that are put in Authority over them ; and above all, by instructing them early to guard against their own natural Frailties and Imperfections ; this, as it is the peculiar Honour and Glory of the Church of *England*, so is it acting up to the true Standard of Primitive Christianity ; it is truly fulfilling the Righteousness of the Gospel, and doing the Will of our Father which is in Heaven.

AND having thus made it evident, that the charitable Education of Poor Children is beneficial to the Publick, advantageous and necessary to the proper Objects of it, and a Virtue most excellent and useful of it self: I proceed to the *Third* and last Head proposed, which is,

— IN Respect to the Patrons and Benefactors of so extensive and publick a Charity as appears at present before us ; to shew that their Labour is not in vain in the Lord : Because of the great and glorious Reward promised in my Text, *and the Lord shall guide thee continually.*

IF the great End and Design of our coming into this World, is to honour and serve GOD, to love our Neighbour, to be useful and beneficial to the Publick ; and to do all the Good we can in our respective Stations: Let us

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enquire, whether we faithfully discharge these great Obligations to Religion, Nature, and Society, as Men that have a just Sense of their Duty to GOD, and a due Regard to the Honour of their Country; to the Good of the Poor, and the Interest and Prosperity of the Nation in general.

AND I am the more willing to enter upon an Enquiry of this Kind, because some controversial Writers of the Church of *Rome* stick not to reproach us with the Want of a Spirit of Publick Charity, which they say departed from us ever since the Time of the Reformation.

BUT there needs not a fuller, nor more evident Demonstration, to answer and confute this Calumny, than the many Hospitals, the Foundations, Endowments, and publick Charities in this Place, which have commenced long since that Period of Time, from which they date our Loss of it.

FOR, without Boasting, Vanity, or Presumption, we may affirm, that there is no one Nation in the World, has more of these charitable, pious, and beneficent Societies, in their whole Dominions, than are incorporated and established in this great and flourishing City alone. But the fullest and best Answer that can be given to vindicate our Church and Country from so false and reproachful an Aspersion as this is, will be to discover the secret, but true Cause of their Complaint against us upon this Article.

FROM the Days of *Augustin* the Monk's Conversion of this Kingdom from Paganism to Christianity, under *Ethelbert*, the Saxon King of *Kent*, about the Year 598, down to the Reign of *Henry the 8th*, 1533, the Nation remained all that Time under the spiritual Tyranny and Usurpations of the See of *Rome*. And the Spirit of publick Charity, as they term it, during that long Tract of above 900 Years, was chiefly confined to the founding of
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Convents, Nunneries, Chantries, Masses for the Dead, in the Payments of Peter-pence and Annates, and in procuring Indulgences, Dispensations, Pardons for Sins, redeeming Souls out of Purgatory, and the like; as those manifold Corruptions by degrees crept into Christianity, and many of them were arbitrarily impos'd upon our Ancestors, for the Sake of Lucre only, and the insatiate Thirst of Gold; till at last one third Part of the Wealth and Revenues of the whole Kingdom was vested in, or rather swallowed up by the Church.

AND from this Fund was Annually drawn into the Pope's Exchequer, immense Sums to be consumed Abroad, in supporting the Power, Magnificence, and Pride of the Papal Chair. In this manner *Rome* drain'd our Treasures, and robb'd our Poor, by the publick Spirit of Popish Charity, that universally prevail'd here for so many Ages. And then we must own from hence, that whilst the measures our Charity since the Reformation by her own irretrievable Loss, she has sufficient Cause to complain.

BUT, on the other Hand, for the Honour of our Religion, and the Reputation of our Country, though it is not 200 Years since the Reformation was established here in *England*; yet there have been more Foundations, Benefactions, and ample Provisions made for employing the industrious Poor; for maintaining the Aged and disabled; for educating young and helpless Children; for curing and supporting the Sick, the Wounded, Maim'd, Impotent and Lunatick, than in all that vast Space of Time, from the first Footsteps of Popery amongst us, down to King *Edward the 6th* Reign.

AND from hence it evidently appears, that instead of this Spirit of publick Charity and Munificence departing from us, our many Hospitals, Charity-Schools, and large Provisions for the Poor, are such noble, lasting, and nume-

rous Monuments, of the extensive Bounty and Piety of our Church, that we may justly apply the Words of the Prophet in my Text to her, — That she has drawn out her Soul to the Hungry, and she has satisfied the afflicted Soul with Bread : therefore does her Light rise from the Obscurities of Popery, and freed from the Darkness of Idolatry, Superstition and Error, in the clear Lustre of her own Purity, she shines as the Noon-Day, and the Lord shall guide her continually.

BUT, lastly, the apparent Benefit and Advantages that accrue to our Church, by the charitable and pious Education of her poor Children, in the directing and promoting of which great Work, you bear so eminent and distinguish'd a Part, will evidently be seen, if we reflect upon a celebrated Oration of one of the worst of the Roman Emperors, and the greatest Foe to Christianity in general, *Julian the Apostate*.

FOR he had with Envy and Regret long observed the wonderful and endearing Effects of that universal Love and Charity, so religiously observed by the Primitive Christians; in uniting their Societies by this invincible Cement, and that by mutually promoting private, they more firmly established the publick Good. And that by these Methods it was, they daily laid stronger Foundations for the Support and Growth of their Religion; and it was this that had so irresistable and prevailing an Influence upon Mankind in general.

HE therefore convened the Governours of his Provinces, and the chief Commanders of his Armies, in order to retrieve the Honour and Reputation of the old Heathen Worship, that was now losing Ground, and declining apace in the World. And he told them how much in vain they employed the Sword, Fire, and Torments, to extirpate Christianity, that only spread and increased the
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more under their inhumane Cruelties ; and got the Mastery and Dominion, the more they strove to extinguish it by Blood.

BUT would we effectually confound and exterminate these professed Enemies to our Gods, we must, says he, intirely change all our former Measures, pursue their Methods, and undermining and ruin them by their own Arts and Conduct. For be you well assured, that we do nothing to the Purpose in this Matter, until we bring up the Excellency and Beneficency of our own Religion, to the Usefulness and Perfection of theirs ; who are not satisfied with making Provision for their own Poor only, but their Bounty and Kindness extend even to the Relief and Support of ours to.

LET us therefore institute, like them, amicable Societies in every City; and instead of Tortures, and shedding their Blood, let us generously strive to out-do them in Love and Charity, and triumph over them a nobler Way, by our Acts of Bounty, Humanity, and good Works.

FOR whilst Mankind, says he, enjoy the publick Benefit and Blessings of such a useful, bounteous and compassionate Religion, as Christianity is ; their Assemblies will be daily crowded with Proselytes, and new Converts ; when our deserted Temples shall remain empty, and the abandoned Altars of our Gods stand unfrequented.

AND if the Apostate *Julian* could thus discover, that select Bodies, united by Love, and acting upon Principles of publick Charity, were the very Life, Cement, and Glory of the Christian Religion ; and to which, next under God, the Primitive Church owed its great Reputation, Growth and Prosperity : And if it is an approved Maxim in Politicks, that all Governments are best maintained and kept up by pursuing those Methods, and observing such Rules, as at first they were rais'd and established by :

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Then we may fairly conclude from hence, that a Society, united by such noble Motives of Piety, Generosity, and unbounded Love as yours, is like a firm and beautiful Pillar, erected not only for Ornament, but to strengthen and support our Church.

SINCE to your Conduct and Care we owe the religious Education, and decent Cloathing, of so many Thousands of tender, young, and distressed Creatures of both Sexes, that appear with so much Innocence, Modesty, Regularity and Order, now before us; who are daily taught, as from our Saviour's Mouth, out of his holy Gospel, by your indulgent Bounty; and fed, as the Multitude were by Him in the Wilderness, with Loaves miraculously multiply'd by Divine Love and Compassion.

THUS by your advancing and carrying on so great, glorious, and excellent a Charity as this is, you in a more eminent and distinguish'd manner answer the great End of your Christian Profession; that is, by promoting the Glory of God, the Honour and Interest of our Establish'd Church, the Support and Maintenance of the Poor, and the Happiness and Prosperity of the Nation in general.

THIS brings me, by Way of Conclusion to the whole, to draw some short Inferences from the foregoing Discourse.

THE old Heathen Moralists in their Writings allow, that there is a Joy so real and sincere, and such an inward Complacency and Delight, that is always the Result of good and virtuous Actions, that no sensual Pleasures whatever, no worldly Enjoyments of any Kind, can come up to the perfect and consummate Happiness that constantly attend them.

BUT then how much more Reason have we to affirm this great Truth, we, who have Views beyond the Grave, and Hopes full of Immortality and Glory; who are assured that we shall reap as we sow, and that our temporal Obedience shall be recompensed with manifold Blessings in this present Life, and with eternal Pleasure and Happiness in that which is to come.

THE Prophet *Isaiab*, in my Text, by a just and happy Metaphor, compares this exquisite Virtue of Charity,
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breaking thro' the Corruption and Degeneracy of human Nature, to Light springing out of Darkness and Obscurity ; and making it bright and glorious as the Noon-day. For true Charity, like the Sun, with genial and piercing Rays, warms the Cold and Barren , and enlivens the comfortless and gloomy Parts of the Earth : By its own Light it discovers secret Distress, and private Miseries and Afflictions, in order to ease and relieve them ; and searches out conceal'd Want ; that by not being clamorous and importunate, merits the more our Compassion and Regard.

HENCE it is plain, that this generous and extensive Virtue is not limited to certain Places, nor confined to any particular Persons ; but it is the Life and animating Soul of that universal Body, whose Head is CHRIST, and whose happy and auspicious Influence through the whole, gives Union, Strength and Vigour to all the Parts. And altho' it is a Precept of our Blessed Saviour's, that *the Left Hand must not know what our Right Hand doth*, yet that relates to private and peculiar Cases ; because, by conveying a Bounty secretly, the very manner of so doing it, often enhances the Value of the Gift ; as on the other Side, the Vanity and Ostentation of boasting a good Deed, generally lessens and takes off from the Generosity of the Kindness done.

BUT there are Charities, and those too of the most excellent Kind, that naturally cannot, and in common Prudence ought not to be concealed ; because when Men perform very laudable and praise-worthy Actions ; where Hypocrisie cannot, and Vanity does not claim a Share in them ; then there are many other Reasons besides those of setting good Examples why they should be published abroad, and made known to the World. And this is our Blessed Saviour's own Determination in the Case, when he says, *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.*

THIS then is that Excellency and Perfection of human Nature, that *drawing out the Soul to the Hungry, and satisfying the afflicted Soul* ; which Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and above all, the tender and compassionate JESUS, have so affectionately recommended to the Practice of Man-

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Mankind, as the most necessary, good, and profitable Work of Life; since it is *doing the Will of our Father which is in Heaven.*

AND because it is the best Evidence of our Reason and Humanity, the noblest Product of our Religion and Virtue, the surest Proof of our Sincerity and Faith; and above all, as it is the most pleasing and grateful Sacrifice that we can offer up to Almighty GOD; who declares here, by the Mouth of the Prophet, — that *this is the Day he has chosen!* and this is the acceptable Work that he takes the most Delight in.

AND may it please GOD, of his infinite Goodness and Mercy, always to direct and guide you in this your pious Care and worthy Endeavours; by giving Grace and Perseverance to these young Children under your Inspection, that they may daily improve in all Godliness, Virtue and Honesty, and perfect the good Work that you have so successfully begun: And by rewarding you with manifold Blessings in this Life present, and with eternal Happiness and Glory in that which is to come, for your Labours of Love and Charity to them; which are not in vain in the LORD.

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